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有鬼来哉

YOUGUI
LAI CAI

鬼就死了。鬼脸也掉了。鬼也就没了。
偏偏他还每天晚上掐着点的将我吃干抹净！

青椒拌皮蛋
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lang="en">

Ghost Invasion - Chapter 01-44

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Chapter 1: The Wedding on the Day of the Ghost Festival

When I rushed back from school, my mother was already in her funeral garments, lying on a door panel put up in front of the house. My mother's picture was in the mourning hall: a pale face, eyeballs slightly bulging. Looking at that face, I didn't even make a sound before my tears fell.

The only reason I went to school was to graduate and find a good job, so I could earn money to take my mother to a big city to treat her illness. But only one more year, only one more year before I would graduate, and she couldn't wait until then!

"Zhaodi, when your mother left, she was still worrying about you." My father patted my back. Very rare; his voice wasn't harsh or menacing.

I thought the reason why he spoke in a mild tone was probably because my mother left, and he had to be a little sad, but his next words were like a thunder on a sunny day.

"I've promised your mother to find a good husband for you, and I have already settled your marriage. Your mother was still alive then and approved it; the family is rich, and if you marry him you would be the mistress, with anything you could ever want."

I stared at him, stunned. So I was unknowingly sold by my father! Now I understood. When I was younger, he used to say all the time that no matter what a son does he would still be part of the family, but a daughter was raised for other people, no matter how she excels! So, he sold me.....

"I am an adult now, and you can't tell me what to do!" For the first time, I expressed my anger at him, yes, I want him to know, that in this house his word is not the law, I'm still here, I'm still a person! Even though I understand perfectly by saying this he would give me another beating.

As expected! That pair of big hands slapped onto my face, stinging badly. I covered my face, too angry to cry. I stared at him hatefully until he started

cursing again, drawing all the relatives in the yard over. A few uncles came and pulled my father away.

As a matter of fact, the villagers have seen this happen more than they'd like. When I was a child, he used to beat me without a reason when he was drunk. Until I got older did I find out that he despised me because I was a daughter!

“Old Mo! Old Mo?”

Someone started calling outside the gate, and after giving me a hateful look, my father left. My uncles shook their heads without saying anything, and I leaned against the doorframe watching the outside proceedings.

The person calling my father was Granny Liu. Everyone in the county knew her, for she was a matchmaker!

Granny Liu set down a cloth bag on the table, smiling at my father: “Woohoo, this bride price will only go up never down! Your Zhaodi is so lucky!” The voice of Granny Liu was infamously loud, making it hard for me to not hear it. When I stood on my tiptoes and looked over the wall, I saw my father hugging that bag tightly, his eyes glittering, continuously thanking Granny Liu.

“Old Mo, this isn't right! Sister Lin was sick at the time and she doesn't know, but you.....” The person talking was my second uncle, the only person in my family who was kind of nice to me, but only “kind of”! After all, that man was my father, and nothing they say would change his mind. But why did this sentence sound wrong Granny Liu said that was the bride price, and then went on about how lucky I was, so obviously the marriage my father told me about was made through Granny Liu. The only thing I don't understand was why second uncle was hesitating in his speech, his face dark.

My second uncle was an honest man, and shut up after my father glared at him. The rest of the people sitting with second uncle started pointing at my father and Granny Liu, muttering quietly, and then looked at me with pity.

Of course I wouldn't agree to this marriage. After my mother's burial, I would go back to school! Thinking about school, I became depressed again. When I went to the head teacher to ask for leave, she had told me that my tuition was long due and I needed to pay. But..... I looked at my father, will he give me money for my tuition?

The answer was of course no!

“Why wouldn’t you pay my tuition?” I yelled at my father.

But my father sipped his beer, and after a long time said, “Why? Didn’t you just said you were an adult now? I can’t tell you what to do! So of course I shouldn’t pay for your tuition!”

I was dumbfounded. I did indeed say that, but that was totally a different thing! Looking at my gloating father, I could only hate him in my heart; I glared at him, but not daring to do anything. But I have to finish school, or my whole life will be ruined.

“Tell me! What do I have to do for you to pay my tuition!”

My father laughed, pulled me to his side, and forced me to sit down, “If you agree to this marriage, I’ll promise to pay your fees until you graduate, huh?”

I know that he wanted me to agree to this marriage because he had already accepted their bride price. Marriage! There’s nothing extraordinary about marriage, you can always divorce! All I have to do is to get a divorce after I graduate! Making up my mind, I nodded and agreed.

“Good!” My father laughed, drinking the rest of the beer in one gulp. “The other family has already picked a time. On the thirteenth of this month, they will come and pick you up!

“The thirteenth?” My eyes widened, “This month is the seventh month in the lunar calendar, and isn’t the thirteenth the Ghost Festival? Who would choose such a day to pick up their bride!” My heart thumped. And today was already the tenth, this marriage.....

Chapter 2: The Frightening Baptism

I wasn't so sure about this, but my father sniffled and wiped his nose, "So what, and only rich people choose dates. When I married your mother nobody cared which day it was on!"

Truthfully, I myself didn't believe in those ghosts and spirits stuff either. The Ghost Festival was only to remind people to be grateful and thank their ancestors. Not putting much thought on it, I

On the day of the burial, my father didn't even let me go. He also stayed at home, and made my uncles carry me out and lock me in a room, even though I was screaming and crying.

Time flies, and the thirteenth came up in the blink of an eye. As soon as the sky got dark, my house began to get crowded. Granny Liu brought a lot of people, saying they were here to pick up the bride. I looked at the time, seven o'clock at night? I thought it was only because the trip would be long that they're here so early.

Not until Granny Liu and another spooky old lady came into my room did I feel something was off. In her hand, Granny Liu had red wedding clothes, the ones people in ancient times wore, the silk ones with embroidery! But the spooky old lady carried a spool of something that looked like red yarn.

"Zhaodi, it's time to wash and put on your wedding clothes." After saying this, Granny Liu moved out of the way and someone carried a tub in. After setting it down, some people started pouring hot water in it, and soon the room was steamy.

A little annoyed, I asked, "There's no need to wash, I'll just put on the clothes!" I tried to grab the wedding clothes from Granny Liu.

But Granny Liu blocked me: "No, the rules can't be changed." After saying so, she put the wedding clothes on my bed, pulled me over, stripped me down and pushed me into the bath tub.

The spooky old lady got some strange, black weeds and threw them into the

water. I almost screamed at the feel of those cold things, and only suppressed myself through extreme self-control. The old lady glared at me, then picked up something that looked like a broom and waved it in the air, all the while muttering.

Getting married for the first time, of course I wouldn't know what kind of a tradition this was. And I didn't dare ask that old lady, for if I looked too long at her spooky, cold face I will definitely get nightmares! I curled myself into the water, feeling very dejected but having no one to talk to. The only person who I could pour out my feelings to was already buried into the cold earth.....

Splash! The water splashed besides me. Before I could understand what was going on, I saw something in the water. It slithered by my feet, cold and thin, until the head of a small snake poked out of the water, hissing at me. The blood in my whole body immediately froze!

I screamed and stood up forcefully, wanting to get out, but a pair of cold hands pressed on my shoulders. I shivered, and suddenly I couldn't move. I stood in the water, the snakes slithering around my feet, occasionally touching me. Every time I felt that icy touch, I couldn't help shivering.

I was pushed back into the water, and Granny Liu took a lid and trapped me in the tub.

"Let me out! Let me out!" I shouted, forgetting to cry, wanting to push aside the lid. But the cold touches in the water drained all my strength and I didn't dare move. I could only scream and yell.

As the results proved, my screaming was useless. They didn't take any notice of me. The only thing to rejoice about was that they took me out while I was still alive. I don't even know how I changed into the wedding clothes, and until that old lady put the veil on my face did I start crying.

But even though I was crying, nobody took notice. Someone grabbed my hand and pulled it up. When she let go, I saw there was a red string tied to my middle finger, just like the string the spooky old woman was carrying when she came into my room.

"The time is about right?" Granny Liu asked.

“Yes, this is the perfect time to leave the house!” This was a strange voice. But there are only three people in the room, me, Granny Liu, and that spooky old lady. The voice sounded ancient, but abnormally sharp, raising goosebumps on people.

“The bride is leaving!” Granny Liu shouted. I heard the door to my room open, and she guided me slowly. The wedding clothes were a bit big, not fitting, and I almost tripped over the hem a few times.

Walking out the door, my middle finger suddenly tightened, as if someone tugged on it. I thought it could only be that spooky old lady and didn’t think much about it, and started walking along with Granny Liu. But when I walked the door, I heard the sharp voice screech, “The groom is leading the way home!”

Chapter 3: The Strange Bride-picking-up Party

I paused, the groom? Why didn't I see the groom before! Among the people who came earlier, none of them looked like a groom. Did he come later? I wanted to ask, but no one was talking in the room.

Even my father didn't say anything when I left the house. The silence was frightening. I could only see the small patch of ground around my feet, because the veil on my head isolated me from my surroundings.

"We're leaving the house, the groom be careful of the threshold!" I had just reached the yard when I heard the voice of that old lady behind me. I panicked, a blind man! I'm marrying a blind man! Or why would that old lady warn him about the threshold! I bit my lip hard. Although I knew from the start there was something wrong with the marriage my father arranged, I didn't think it would be a blind man.

Whatever, let him be blind. That's even better, because getting a divorce would be easier! I let out a breath, and Granny Liu reminded me it's time to get in the carriage. This was really a traditional wedding, but I wasn't in a mood to enjoy all this.

After getting into the carriage, Granny Liu whispered into my ear: "Zhaodi, this veil must be taken off by the groom at his family. Don't take it off yourself, it's not lucky.

I nodded, and after a while the carriage was lifted up, and set somewhere else firmly¹. I felt like I was on a car, so when it was moving at a constant speed I lifted up an edge of the veil, and found that they had put the carriage in some sort of truck. The good thing was that the truck was open, the ones where there isn't a roof. The truck rolled forward slowly.

The wind was blowing, occasionally lifting up the curtains of the carriage. This was a small town, so we didn't meet a lot of cars on the way. But the sound coming from behind wasn't quite right. Maybe it was because I was too far away and couldn't hear clearly, but I'm sure it was music, and the kind of a flute. It didn't sound like a tune you would play on a happy occasion, but rather one

usually heard on funerals.

Out of curiosity, I couldn't help sticking my head out, lifting the veil and searching for the sound. Only when I looked did I get a fright, because not far behind me, I saw people in a car continuously throwing out white paper money, covering the whole road! The sound came from the trunk of that car. My heart started beating faster.

What was going on? Wasn't paper money only for the dead? And that funeral music was sounding very creepy in the darkness of night. The wind was cold, almost icy! It penetrated down to my bones, and I suppressed the urge to scream while watching the paper money thrown out by the car behind.

I pulled my head back into the carriage, feeling uneasy. What's going on, what's this all about? I repeated this sentence continuously to myself that I didn't even notice when the truck stopped, until Granny Liu called from outside: "Zhaodi, don't fall asleep, we're here."

The carriage was lifted up again, and then set on the ground.

"The groom has brought the bride home! Kick the carriage door²!" Once the voice of the old lady stopped, a gush of wind blew into the carriage. Based on the patch of light besides my feet, the curtain of the carriage must have been lifted up by someone.

I couldn't see, so I didn't know what the person I'm marrying looks like, but I felt afraid. The fear came from deep inside my heart, and although I tried my best to make myself look normal, my body was shaking. I didn't know if anyone noticed.

Granny Liu guided me off the carriage and into the house. It was basically the same like on television. I walked through the door, stepped over the brazier, and Granny Liu called out, "The bride is here, the bride is here!" Although she was shouting, I felt like there wasn't many people in the room; it was very quiet.

"First bow, to the sky and the earth!"

As soon as she finished speaking, Granny Liu turned me around, making me face the doorway I just entered from, and I bowed stiffly.

"Second bow, to the parents!" Now that I knew the direction, I turned back

around until Granny Liu told me to stop, and bowed slightly.

“Third bow, husband and wife!”

I turned around, and just like before, bowed down slightly. But before I could get up, a sound like an old clock chimed in the room, the chime vibrating in the room, twice! The clock struck twice, does that mean it's two in the morning? When I thought about this time, my whole body felt cold.

The chiming stopped, and I was about to get up when I heard a cock crow right in front of me! It was very loud, and stunned me for a moment. Granny Liu, who was guiding me, also stiffened. I came back to my senses and pulled off the veil.

What I saw, was that right in front of me, stood a big rooster! The rooster stared at me almost meaningfully, and I looked at it, my mouth dropping open in incredulity.....

1. It's the type of carriage that doesn't have wheels and is carried by people. In ancient China, the bride is always carried to the groom's house in one of these carriages.↵
2. Kicking the carriage door is a tradition and symbol of luck in Chinese traditional weddings.↵

Chapter 4: I Married a Dead Person

“Quick! Quick! Bring her into the bridal chamber!” Granny Liu gripped my hand tightly while I stared stupidly at the rooster in front of me, until two tall men clothed in black carried me up the stairs and threw me into a room.

The light was dim in the room, and lifting my head, I saw a table with a large black and white picture! To be exact, it was a picture for the mourning hall, because there was a black ribbon all around the frame.

In front of the picture, two red wedding candles swayed. There was also a lot of food on the table, much more than usual for a memorial. I moved closer towards the picture, wanting to get a better look.

Only when I leaned against the table and squinted did I see the person in the picture clearly. His handsome features were looked cold and daunting, haughtiness showing through his slight smile, his skin so white I was jealous, and not to even mention his pink lips that seemed magical, making people wanting to give it a kiss.

I reached out my hand, but when my fingertips touched the frame, a sharp pain came from my fingers and shot up all the way to my heart. I withdrew my hand quickly, looking at that black and white photograph, frightened. I felt that his gaze had come alive, looking at me, staring at me, as if it could penetrate me, penetrate my inner thoughts!

A dead person! This was the most serious problem I realized when I came back to my senses. The strange baptism, the paper money on the way there, the rooster in my wedding ceremony, and this portrait of a dead person in this room! I now finally understood, I didn't marry a blind person, but a dead person, a person that does not even belong to this world anymore!

Dejected, I sat on the edge of the bed. My tears fell freely. What else could I do except cry? I had thought of thousands of different scenarios, but just not this one. A wedding totally dictated by someone else was already bad enough, not to mention that I became the wife of a dead person.....

I cried till my eyes hurt, then rushed to the table and swept everything off of it.

The sound of china breaking was like my heart. I had never thought that my biological father would be so cruel, as to sell me as a wife for a dead person. Now I also knew while my uncles were pointing at me and gossiping.

I picked up the chair besides me and threw it against the door. Until the chair, twisted, fell to the floor, did I start crying, "Let me out! Let me out!" I tugged at the doorknob with all my might, but it didn't budge! Like I thought, it was locked from the outside.

"Let me out!" I curled up against the door and started crying. Lost, helpless, my life wasn't supposed to be this way.

Bang! A heavy noise sounded inside the room. I wiped my tears and looked over, and saw a small door inside the room suddenly opened. It was dark inside.

I watched it carefully, afraid that something might walk out. Even though I knew clearly there was no one in this room but me, still, all the hairs on my body stood on end, because I kept feeling that someone in this room was looking at me!

Yes, this was what I felt, and I noticed just now that the temperature in the room had become colder, cold enough that when I exhaled, I could see a faint puff of white.

Frightened, I curled myself up even tighter. It shouldn't be like this, it's summer right now, how could I see the breath from my own mouth! I exhaled lightly again, and that faint mist made me almost faint.

There was something in this room! Surely, it couldn't be.....

I turned my eyes towards the table that held the portrait. It couldn't be! There are no ghosts in this world! I stared at the man in the picture, silently comforting myself, you are already dead, and if you're dead you don't exist. How could I believe in ghosts and spirits.

When the door to the bathroom banged once again, I let out a scream. My heart felt like it was on a spring, jumping faster and faster. I stared unbelieving at the bathroom door. Just now, that door was open.

"Wind! It must be the wind!" I told myself in a small voice, but I understood perfectly that even if the closed door was blown open by the wind, this door

could not be shut by the wind! Because except for a wall of french windows on one side, there wasn't a single window that could open in this room!

I scanned the room nervously. It's impossible, I repeated in my mind, it's impossible to have ghosts in this world! I tried my best to calm myself, but at last I put my head on my knees, my hands hugging my head tightly.

The old saying goes that if you didn't do anything bad, you wouldn't be afraid even if a ghost knocked on your door at midnight. I never hurt anyone, so why would I feel scared? Even if there really was a ghost, so what? Hate has its target and debts have their owners. If he had unfinished business, it has nothing to do with me, a total stranger!

"Mother!" I cried out, crying, my head between my knees. Fear doesn't go away just by talking, not to mention that the air around me was even colder than before.

My tears were like a flood breaching a dike, overflowing again.....

Chapter 5: Little Strawberries

I don't know how long I cried, but not until my body was stiff and I wanted to turn over did I realize that it was soft where I lay, like I was sleeping in clouds, soft and fluffy. I was very tired, and not just physically. This exhaustion came from inside of me. I only wanted to find a place free of anyone and sleep like this peacefully.

I wish everything that happened in these three days was a dream, a nightmare, and when I wake up I'll be back in school, my mother still alive, and I'm not married. That everything had not happened.

And then a series of cold touches landed on my face, like snowflakes, like..... kisses! It felt as if someone was kissing me! Surprised, I tried to open my eyes, but my eyelids felt like mountains, and even though I tried my hardest I could not open them.

The feeling was distinct. The kisses started on my forehead, and when they moved down to my brows, I could smell a sweet fragrance like the sea. Was this a dream or real?

When the kisses came to the tip of my nose, it felt soft, and I could feel his breathing clearly. His breath had that sweet fragrance of the sea, but also with a hint of coldness, cold as the bottomless hell.

When his kisses came to my lips, I almost cried out, because it felt way too real. I could feel his slightly opened mouth, his delicate tongue tracing my lips, again and again, almost like he was tasting a delicious dessert.

Suddenly, I felt like something covered me, because the cold touch on my body no longer felt like kisses, instead as if someone was on top of me. I couldn't feel any weight, but I couldn't explain the cold feeling either.

Fingers! His long fingers flitted over my face, and then came an aggressive kiss. There was something in my mouth, entangling with me, sucking fiercely, as if it wanted to suck me dry.

I wanted to defend myself, but my body acted as if it weren't mine, as if I could

only feel, but unable to defend, letting that plunder wash over me like a wave.....

Knock, knock, knock!

I was wakened by the knocking. I opened my eyes and looked at my surroundings confusedly. I was sleeping on the only bed in the room.

“Mistress! Are you awake? Madame wants me to tell you it’s time for breakfast!”

“Oh!” I answered, sitting up on the bed quickly. Coolness swept over me. I stared, because on my body, there weren’t any clothes! Completely naked, and as I threw away the quilt and saw the uncovered skin, I started screaming.

“Mistress! Are you okay?” The person outside the door asked quietly, sounding worried.

I stared, frightened, looking at the slightly red-purple marks on my body. Although I haven’t yet been in a relationship, I knew what these were — hickeys! At school, my classmates called these “little strawberries”!

“No! It’s impossible!” I yelled, dragging my thin quilt after me and rushing into the bathroom, completely ignoring the pain from my feet when I stepped on the broken pieces of china. Last night was a dream, it wasn’t real! I repeated again and again.....

Until I saw myself in the mirror, and those countless “little strawberries”. Not only that, but my lips also looked red and puffy. The aggressive and fierce kiss reappeared in my mind!

I raised my hand and started rubbing the mirror vigorously. There must be something wrong with the mirror, I was sure last night was only a dream! Why did this happen, why!

Chapter 6: Family Members (I)

No Content

Chapter 7: Family Members (II)

No Content

Chapter 8: I've Actually Married into the Huo Family

Not only was An Qiang's eyes fierce, the glaring red at the corner of her eye pulsed, only on one eye, but frightened, I hurriedly moved my gaze back to uncle Huo Ningen. I tried to smile naturally. After all, he was the only person friendly towards me since I came to this "home" yesterday.

He also smiled, then pointed across from him: "That's my father and also your grandfather, Huo Jiancheng! He's pretty old, so sometimes....." He stopped, pointing at his temples, and curled his lips.

I knew what he meant. Grandfather's gaze was unfocused, but when he looked towards me, his kindly face still relaxed me.

"And the brat besides you is Xiaoran's younger brother, Xiaojin."

I looked at Xiaojin and nodded, but what I didn't expect was him suddenly leaning over. His face was almost on mine, and I could even feel his breaths, smelling faintly of sandalwood.

"How was it, marrying my dead older brother. I can't believe that you women would do anything for money!" As he was finishing his double-meaning sentence, he looked towards my stepmom Yun Li. I kept on feeling that something had happened between them!

I saw An Qiang smile and heard Yun Li's furious voice, "Huo Xiaojin, you'd better behave yourself more, or don't think about using that credit card in your hands." Not only her voice, but when I looked at Yun Li, her face was also white and green.

"Haha, not afraid to do but afraid of people talking about it! Whatever, I'm leaving, in case I bother someone." Finishing his sentence, Huo Xiaojin stood up and left handsomely, but his careless and casual look irritated me. No matter how I looked at him he seemed like a playboy, a rich guy that was born holding a golden spoon¹ and never knew what work was.

"Don't get angry, don't get angry!" This time, Huo Ningen's hand was directly on top of Stepmom's hand, but Stepmom didn't look the least bit

uncomfortable. My eyeballs almost fell to the floor. Being ambiguous wasn't strange; what was strange was that wasn't aunt An Qiang right besides him?

My head lowered, I glanced at An Qiang nervously. What I saw was that her bloodshot eyes were filled with hatred.....

"Please keep on eating! I'm done." I almost ran from the room without waiting for them to answer. I had never been in such turbulent waters² before, I could only escape.

For a whole day, I tried to stay as far away as I could from that house, not even returning for lunch. This was the first time I saw a house so stylish. It had four floors, built in an European manner, the four red pillars in front very eye-catching. Outside of the house, the grass was soft and everything was green. I found the most remote corner I could and did nothing for almost the whole day.

Because of yesterday night, my hand moved up to my neck unconsciously. There, that cool feeling was still present throughout the whole day. Huo Xiaoran! The Huo family! My eyes opened wide and I stared at that house faraway. This was the Huo house? The richest family in the city!

The Huo family! In my school, almost everyone knew about it, for all the seniors wanted to work there when they graduated! Not only because there were golden bachelors³, but also because it had a promising future!

It can't be! Huo Xiaoran is dead? When I left school, I saw a senior running excitedly in the hallway, waving an interview note and yelling, she could finally see the real Huo Xiaoran in person! But now.....

"Mistress!" Far away, someone shouted and waved at me. I let out a long breath, not wanting to acknowledge, but still standing up.

"Mistress, Madame wants to see you. She said please be there before dinner!" The servant explained hurriedly, then looked at me, her face red and panting.

I nodded, but when I thought about Yun Li, I still felt uncomfortable.

1. Born holding a golden spoon mean born into a very rich family.[↩](#)
2. Complex relationships and under-the-surface motives.[↩](#)
3. Rich single men.[↩](#)

Chapter 9: Stepmom's Teaching

"What's your name?" I stopped and asked quietly.

The servant first looked at me, conflicted, but at last answered, "My surname is Wang, the others all call me Matron Wang."

I smiled at her. Matron Wang had a kindly face, and she also smiled faintly. Before I could say anything else, she started hurrying me, "Go soon, for if Madam gets angry, you will be in trouble." I nodded and followed her.

On the way there, I asked Matron Wang all about this family, but until the end, the only useful piece of information I got was that Stepmom was only three years older than me. But Matron Wang didn't say anything regarding how Stepmom married in, or how Huo Xiaoran died. Whenever she got close to those topics she just stopped talking.

"Madame!" Matron Wang knocked on the door, "Mistress is here."

"Come in!" Yun Li's voice sounded from inside. I smiled at Matron Wang and pushed the door. In the study, there were two men sitting across from Yun Li. Yun Li glanced at me and stood up, and the two men also stood.

"Okay, lawyer Chen, let's pause here today!" Yun Li shook hands with one of the men. The two men left without speaking or even looking at me.

Yun Li sat down again and waved me over. When I walked over, she didn't tell me to sit down, so I could only stand there. I couldn't bring myself to say the word "stepmom". She was only three years older than me, only twenty four, and now she's my stepmom!

"Since you married into the Huo family, some things still need to be said." Yun Li picked up her tea from the table and sipped it, glancing at me.

I didn't say anything, waiting with my head down.

She set down her teacup and folded her arms across her chest. She cleared her throat: "I only wanted to warn you on one thing, don't leave the Huo house without my permission. As you should know, the Huo family is not to be trifled

with! Don't try to escape or anything. If I had to waste my precious time searching for you, the consequence wouldn't be something you or I want to see!"

Her tone was cold. I pressed my lips, not daring to look at her, lowering my head even more. I had thought of escaping, but now it looks like this plan was ruined.

"Very good!" She looked at me approvingly and nodded. After letting out a low sigh, she started talking again, "Actually, I don't want you to be widow at such a young age either. If you really want to blame someone, blame it on your horoscope. I looked at a lot of people's horoscopes and none of them matched Xiaoran's, but yours did! Maybe this is your fate." Her voice wasn't as cold as before; softer.

"There's nothing bad about marrying into the Huo family; there's food and there's drink! I heard your father say that you liked studying, so after this week, I'll send you back to school. Only one thing, you must come home for the night. Don't worry, there'll be someone to send and pick you up." Her hand covered my hand and squeezed it affectionately, then let go.

I raised my head slightly, still not daring to say anything, only nodding.

"The Huo family is so big, and I have to lead it and support it. It's very tiring, but what can I do? From now on, if you need anything, just tell me, Stepmom is a reasonable person, as long as the request is not too unreasonable, Stepmom will satisfy you!"

I didn't think she would speak so nicely, and I found a little more courage. I sniffled and said, "Step, Stepmom!" I still wasn't used to it. She looked at me, and biting my teeth I still said it, "Why would you find a bride for a dead person?"

After saying it, I lowered my head. I knew her face would become extremely ugly, but I still wanted to know. If possible, I wish she would let me leave!

Bang! Her hand slammed onto the table heavily, her gentleness all gone. "Is marrying into the Huo family not good enough for you? Being nicer towards you and you think you're the head! Remember this, although you married into the Huo family, although you're now the Mistress, don't forget, I am running the

Huo family! You'll get what's yours, but don't even think about what's not yours!"

I didn't understand! What did she mean by that?

Chapter 10: Uncle's Stand

At dinner time, the chair besides me was empty. It should have been Huo Xiaojin's place. I glanced at it and lowered my head, replaying what Yun Li said to me in my mind. Without Huo Xiaojin, the table seemed strangely quiet. The only thing that didn't change was uncle Huo Ningen still getting Stepmom food smilingly.

Sitting besides Huo Ningen, An Qiang was still dressed in black with her eyes red. She stared but never talked. I'm starting to think that maybe she's dumb?

Putting down my bowl, I couldn't stay here anymore. I returned to my room. During the day, Matron Wang had asked if she could help me clean my room, I told her no, because I couldn't let anyone in this family know about that glaring spot of red on the bed sheets!

I removed the bed sheet and told some servants to get a new one. I took the old one into the bathroom and started washing it myself. I kept swallowing and tears rolled down my cheek. I lost my virginity last night and I don't even know who did it!

I wiped away my tears stubbornly, telling myself, don't cry, you can't cry, they'll pay it back one day!

"Mistress, are you there?"

I heard Matron Wang calling me. I looked at the time, it was already nine o'clock at night. What was wanted of me at this time? Did Stepmom want to rebuke me again?

I let go of the bed sheet and wiped my hands on my clothes, then opened the door: "Is there anything?"

Matron Wang looked at me, puzzled. I knew my eyes were red and smiled awkwardly. She spoke: "Mr. Huo wants to see you. He's in the formal living room."

I nodded, and as usual, Matron Wang led the way. I wasn't surprised at the luxuriousness of this house anymore. This was the Huo house, and it's not

strange for them to have so many rare stuff!

“Zhaodi! Come, sit down!” Uncle Huo Ningen was still smiling gently, and not only did he tell me to sit down, he also poured a glass of water and handed it to me. I was a little surprised; he was the only person in the Huo family to be so nice to me.

I stood up and asked quietly, “Uncle, is there anything?”

“Don’t be nervous!” He patted my shoulder, then indicated for me to sit down. I nodded and sat down obediently. But only I knew how tightly I was gripping the glass.

“Zhaodi! It’s understandable if you are not used to here yet since you just came. Well, I’m now one of your seniors. And I’m the only person supporting this Huo family now!”

Hearing this, I was confused. This sounded like what Stepmom said to me during day. The only difference between them is Stepmom’s cold and harsh attitude and his soft and gentle words.

I didn’t dare look at him. Staring at the glass in my hands, I nodded. The only thing I didn’t understand was, what actually happened in this family? And why did I, a girl who married a dead person, feel like I was in the middle of it all?

He patted my shoulder again and said, “I hear that Yun Li has already talked to you, but I still want to warn you. A person is called a person because he has a brain. You need to first understand some things, but I won’t say too much. Just remember, the family name will always be Huo!”

From the beginning till end, I never made a sound, even when Uncle told me to go back to my room. I was still confused. Yun Li warned me that she controlled this family, but Uncle reminded me at night that this family will always have the last name of Huo! Suddenly, I felt like I had inexplicably walked onto a thin wire.....

Chapter 11: He Came at Twelve O'clock Midnight

Listening to the tick-tock from the bathroom, looking at the photograph Stepmom ordered to hang on the wall, I lay on my bed. To someone naive as me, this family was too mysterious, too confusing!

Tap, tap, tap.....

The sound came from the hallway, but sounded like it was pacing in front of my door. I sat up nervously, staring at the door. I glanced at the clock, twelve o'clock at night! This was a sensitive time..... Ghosts!

It can't be, I comforted myself. But the hands that were clinging tightly to the quilt betrayed the fear in my heart.

Inside the room, the temperature started dropping quickly. Still feeling stuffy the moment before, all the hairs on my arm stood up now. Of course, I understood clearly that although it was getting colder, fear was the real reason.

"Who's there!" I yelled, because just now, from looking at the gap between the door and the floor, I thought I saw a shadow standing in front of my door.

Knock, knock, knock! Three times, someone knocked on the door three times. Every time the knock sounded, I trembled. My forehead was wet and cold. I got off of the bed hesitatingly, quietly creeping towards the door. When my hand touched the cold doorknob, I could even hear my own teeth chattering.

Knock, knock, knock! Three times, three times again! I almost screamed and pulled my hand back, but I put forth all my courage and opened the door

"Why, why, did it take you so long to open, open the door! Are you hiding a man, man inside?"

I stared at the drunken Huo Xiaojin in front of my door, my head buzzing. Not until he pushed past me and walked into my room did I come back to my senses, "What are you doing! Why are you in my room in the middle of the night!" I shouted, trying to stop him from lying on my bed.

No use! I found out that he was much stronger than he looked, and although I

used all my strength I couldn't pull him back. I could only watch as he threw himself onto my new bed sheets.

"By, by marrying into the Huo family, how much money did they give you? How much?" He laid on the bed and laughed, like this was some extremely funny story. Truthfully, I myself thought it was funny too. Money? The Huo family did give money, but not to me! I didn't get a cent

And from the beginning, this marriage was a complete joke. A living person marrying someone dead for a month. If this wasn't a joke, what was it?

"Get out!" I yelled. He had trampled my dignity. Even if this really was a complete joke, he Huo Xiaojin still didn't have the right to make fun of me!

I pointed at the door. I didn't need to be nice or polite towards him, especially since I've always hated these drunk and smelly men.

He raised his head a little, moving the pillow besides beneath his head and looked at me, his gaze unfocused. He didn't say anything, but goosebumps rose all over my skin. "Did you hear me? Get out now!" I increased my volume.

Originally, I planned to go up and pull him out, but I sensed danger from his gaze. So I could only yell even louder, not only wanting wake him up, but also hoping that someone else in the house might hear! My brother-in-law sleeping on my bed on the second day of my marriage. If Stepmom knew about this, how would I even live here in the days to come?

And I was hoping that when she was happy, she might let me leave the Huo family!

Chapter 12: The Brother-in-Law Who Came at Midnight

He started laughing, but his hand moved to unbutton his shirt. His tan skin, covered with a thin layer of perspiration, was exposed completely. More exasperating, he gaze towards me had *that* implication!

His unfocused eyes squinted. His handsome nose was like an arrogant mountain; his red, slightly thin lips were as red as an apple. My gaze fell on those crimson lips, watching his breath coming out of them.

“How about this! Do you want me to love you tonight?” His voice was very soft, but my face instantly boiled. I knew how red my face must be even without looking. I swallowed, and focused my gaze on his eyes.

“Huo Xiaojin! Get this straight, I am your sister-in-law! By doing this, are you living up to your older brother’s wishes?” I pulled out the husband I hadn’t even seen, just to make him go away.

He paused, but that was only for one or two seconds before he slightly shifted his position, his hand unbuttoning another button, all the while replying lazily, “My brother is already dead. If I could give you a child, it would be a good deed for the Huo family, wouldn’t you say so?”

He was asking me, but I took a step back, frightened. Was there not a single normal person in this house?

“What? Are you afraid of me?” This time, he pulled off his only shirt and threw it towards me.

This was the first time I saw the body of a man. Although it was only the upper half, I still covered my face, embarrassed. But I was also afraid he might leap at me, so I could only peek at him between my fingers. Of course, by doing so, it was unavoidable to not see that perfect body.

He ruffled his hair restlessly, then looked at me. He extended his finger and signaled me to come over. My heart first stopped for a few seconds then lost its rhythm, jumping around in my chest blindly.....

What I usually say: if you can't tolerate any more, then don't tolerate anymore! I stopped covering my face and picked the damp shirt from the ground, covering the space between me and the bed in a few strides, grabbed that annoying hand, tugged hard, and he rolled off the bed onto the floor.

"Remember this you brat! I'm your sister-in-law! Sister-in-law!" Saying this, I threw the shirt on his face. To tell the truth, I didn't know where my courage came from either. I was just really mad then. But as I saw the surprise on his face, I realized that the more afraid I was of him, the more unscrupulous he was.

Good! I grabbed his hand, pulling and tugging him to the door. The only thing, when I pulled him, I found that he was much lighter. When he came in, I had tried to pull him out with no avail. He was as strong as a bull back then; why is he so light now?

Although I was puzzled, I still gladly threw him out the door. Before closing the door, I didn't forget to yell at him, "When pressured, even rabbits can bite! So don't pressure me to that point!" Finished yelling, I closed the door angrily. Actually, to be more accurate, I didn't close the door, I slammed it!

Clap, clap, clap..... Just as I closed the door and breathed a sigh of relief, applause came from behind me! My body froze and my mind turned quickly, but I didn't know how to process this information! Because there shouldn't be anyone else. So what did this clapping mean?

Chapter 13: Ghost Invasion

“What? Where did your courage go?” It was a man’s voice, an extremely attractive man’s voice, hoarse yet cold.

My eyes haven’t blinked since a few moments ago, and my body became so stiff that I couldn’t control it. The voice besides my ears was ethereal, like it was a dream. I started planning in my heart, should I open the door and run out and shout, or should I turn around to see what was going on in the room? But if I turned around and saw what was happening, will I still have the chance to escape?

All kinds of thought flew through my mind quickly. Suddenly, the zipper on my chest started moving. I reached out fiercely and grabbed the sliding zipper and turned around, but my hand never left the door knob! Leaving an escape route is always correct.

What I saw was a familiar yet strange face, but he didn’t look real. I stood there, not knowing what to do. The scent in my nostrils was that sweet fragrance of the sea from my dream! It was him!

My feet suddenly gave way under me and I almost fell to the ground, but I was still leaning on the door so I managed to stand up. I tried my best to support my body. My everything, he took away what I treasured the most!

“Who are you!” I tried to keep my voice without emotion.

He looked at me, one side of his mouth curving up. He pointed at the photograph on the wall and answered coldly, “Don’t tell me you don’t know who he is!”

“When, when did you come in!” I tried really hard to suppress my scream. In my world, there weren’t ghosts and witches. Looking at a face a hundred percent similar to the photo, I still searched for a flaw, even though I clearly saw his ethereal figure, even though I was almost sure he shouldn’t be on this world!

He humphed coldly and raised his brows: “When? Do you mean when I went to your house to pick you up, or do you mean here last night when we..... ” He

paused meaningfully, looking towards my neck. I immediately raised my hand and put it there. There, right under my ear, was a hickey from last night!

“I don’t need to explain your duty anymore, do I?” He frowned slightly, his finger slicing the air. I only felt something slip away from my hands and a cold air pummelled my body. I looked down and saw the jacket I was holding tightly in my hand had fell to the floor.

I blushed and stooped down to pick up my jacket, but suddenly my whole body flew up into the air. To be accurate, I floated up, like the earth had no gravity! I screamed, putting the blame on the man sitting on the edge of the bed, “Let me go! Let me go!”

When I was thrown heavily onto the bed, he disappeared, but reappeared a second later, his voice besides my ear, “Since you refused Huo Xiaojin, I will love you even more tonight.”

The voice was very soft, still so unreal, but when I turned my head I saw that ethereal but pale face. Cold sweat covered my hands and the blood in my body felt like it was frozen. I couldn’t even feel any warmth in my body. Except the cold, I couldn’t feel anything.

His hand moved to my chin, slowly tracing, that sweet fragrance of the sea enveloping me. No! I shouted in my heart, but my mouth only moved without making a sound.....

Chapter 14: Can We Please Talk?

Bang! Someone hit the door hard. He suddenly stopped what he was doing, and because that loud noise and his momentary pause, I was able to extract myself and wriggled the door knob desperately without even bothering to pick up my jacket on the floor.

But that door.....

“You think you can escape?” His cold voice was full of ridicule and contempt.

“Open the door! Open the door for me!”

Huo Xiaojin was yelling outside of the door, but I didn’t have time to think about him. With my back to the door, I closely watched the man lying on the bed. It was him, it was definitely him last night; the scent of him was my biggest evidence. But..... I glanced at that black and white photograph.

He suddenly started laughing, but that laugh didn’t sound good. I could even hear the danger in it.

“He is I! And I, am Huo Xiaoran!” He stated confidently. Apart from pride, I could also hear a sliver of hatred in his voice. I shivered uncontrollably, my teeth chattering. I tried my best at getting used to look at him.

“There isn’t hate without reason or debts without debtors. I don’t owe you anything, why do you keep bothering me!” All the while repeating continuously in my heart, I didn’t do any bad things, so I’m not afraid of ghosts!

Suddenly, he disappeared from my sight, like he never existed. On the empty bed, except for the imprint caused by my lying on it, there wasn’t anything else. I didn’t dare to blink, looking around nervously. Nothing, there really wasn’t anything. I was almost persuaded that everything that just happened was my imagination!

“Open the door! Do you hear me?” Outside the door, Huo Xiaojin was still yelling and shouting, but I was too lazy to bother. I let out a breath once I heard Matron Wang persuading him to go away. Although there was a door between us, I suddenly felt safe again.

Looking at the clothes on the floor, I picked them up slowly. Was it really my imagination?

I leaned on the door and relaxed. Suddenly, someone gripped my hands firmly, and a cold feeling started creeping up from my wrists. I started screaming, “Help, help..... Umpf!” I couldn’t even finish shouting.

Kisses! I felt his lips upon mine, his cool yet agile tongue pushing into my mouth before I realized what was happening. His tongue tangled with mine while I tried to escape. I even thought of biting down hard, but before I could put that thought into action, a cold hand grabbed my chin.

Struggling, I was struggling to escape. But my body was as if it was nailed to door. Help me! Matron Wang! I wanted to shout this, but until I heard Matron Wang pull Huo Xiaojin away, I still wasn’t able to make a sound.

“So, how did you like my kisses?”

I stared at him, breathing heavily. I really wanted to slap him, but my body couldn’t move, so I could only glare at him. If gazes could kill, I would kill him without hesitating!

His hand fell upon my ear, sliding down slowly, stopping on my shoulder. It was cold, bone piercing cold. I sucked in my breath because my shoulder really started hurting.

“So you seem to like yesterday better, and I..... like your nervous and frightened breathing!”

“No! Wait, !”

Not that I wanted to surrender, but I didn’t want to repeat what happened last night. If we could talk, then I wanted him to understand that there was nothing between him and I, that we don’t have any relationship!

Chapter 15: Striking a Deal

Suddenly, my body felt light and I could move again. But he vanished, and like last time, there wasn't a trace of him. Only one thing, it was still cold in the room.

"Come out! I know you're still here. It's not scary anymore if you play the same trick twice!" I yelled. I moved across the room cautiously, knowing that hiding doesn't help. Right now, I understood clearly that he really was a ghost! Although I still couldn't quite accept it, the facts before my eyes forced me to believe his existence.

I moved quietly, without making any sound. I looked at my surroundings nervously, but even until my balled fists became numb, I still couldn't find him.

"Very well then! Tell me, what can you do for me?" His sudden voice came from the desk in the room. Startled, I turned around and saw his finger moving through the air, and on the bookshelf not far away, my diary was floating in the air according to his finger's movements.

Nervous, I took a few steps back, trying to maintain a steady distance between me and him. When I made sure he wouldn't suddenly appear around me, I cleared my throat and said, "There's nothing between us, I only want you to let me go!" Yes, today was the first time I saw him! Of course, last night was a mistake.

He only glanced at me and didn't speak. But his icy gaze made me shiver, and after swallowing I tried again, "Go find whoever owes you, I Mo Xiaoya, has always been open and straightforward in my actions." My voice was a bit louder. Courage, I needed courage, I need courage to face him! When I got to the "open and straightforward" part, I even stood taller.

"Interesting!" He empty and cold voice sounded, with a hint of laughter. Without any movement he suddenly changed direction. He crossed his arms and looked at me. The corner of his mouth was slightly lifted, as if he was smiling, but more like pride originating from his core.

"You dare say you don't owe me anything?" He raised one of his brows.

I paused, not anticipating such a question. After staring at him blankly for a few moments, I nodded my head nervously. I didn't owe him anything!

"So that woman Yun Li is trying to play along!" He suddenly started laughing, but his icy laughter sounded more like hatred.

I didn't know how to respond, so I could only stare at him. There were too many strange things in this family, too many mysteries. I didn't want to get involved in any of them, but I suddenly found that I was getting closer and closer to the eye of the hurricane. Danger, I sensed danger. I watched him nervously, asking quietly, "What do you mean?"

"What do I mean? Based on the will that I left, you are the heir to the Huo Corporation. She didn't tell you that?"

"Huo Corporation! Heir?" My mind was blank as I repeated these words.

"As I expected. So she decided to burn her bridges. Even if she got the person she trusted the most, it still wouldn't be as easy as buying a totally harmless person. Smart!"

He tilted his head, his eyes squinting. The chair beneath him only stood on two legs! I swallowed again, turning my gaze away from the chair and started thinking. There was a lot of information in his words!

Chapter 16: Why Can't I

[Next Chapter]

He suddenly stood up, but the chair was still standing on two legs. I watched him fearfully, afraid that he would do something, but he only moved his finger and another chair moved to behind me so fast I nearly missed it's movement. I looked at it and understood that he wanted me to sit down.

After giving me a satisfied glance, he sat back on his chair and said coldly, "Have you chose your side yet?" He voice was so unemotional it was frightening. A sense of dignity came off of him that I didn't dare look him in the eye but lowered my head and stared at my fingers.

I really didn't understand what he meant by "sides".

"Think about it carefully, if you choose her, after tonight, I won't let you see tomorrow's sun."

I paused, stunned. I forgot to be afraid and raised my head to look at him. His meaning was very clear, he was going to kill me! When I saw his impassive, handsome face, I wondered if I misheard. But as soon as I frowned, his voice floated over clearly.

"You did not mishear! If you choose Yun Li, I would without a doubt..... kill you!" His voice was even colder than before, and a killing intent appearing in his eyes.

I shook my head unconsciously. No! I didn't want to die. This was my survival instinct.

"Very good! Then unravel the truth with me!" I wasn't able to follow his sudden switch of topics. Maybe because I didn't answer, he asked, annoyed, "What?"

"Nothing!" I shook my head like the wind blowing the willow branches. But I knew clearly in my heart, that something must have happened between him and Stepmom, but I.....

"I don't want to get involved!" I said this without doubt. I hope that he could

understand my feelings and added hurriedly, “To the Huo family, I’m an outsider! And I want to leave after a period of time, to have my own life. I came here unwillingly!”

Although I didn’t mention the details, I wanted him to know that I wouldn’t become a pawn for Stepmom but I also wouldn’t work for him! I only wanted to stay here until I graduate, then just vanish from the Huo family, get a new name and start a new life. That was what I wanted!

He suddenly started laughing, like I just told a really funny joke. His body was even shaking. I frowned, confused.

But then I got impatient and shouted, “What’s so funny?” My voice was really loud, so loud that I scared myself.

The good thing was that he stopped laughing, but his gaze towards me was very complex that I couldn’t explain. But my eyes were full of determination. This was my choice: not Yun Li, also not him, but myself!

“Because of your courage, I want to warn you on one thing! Did you think if you were obedient she would let you go? Did you think you could leave after coming to the Huo family? Did you think that you still had a choice?” He covered his mouth and chuckled quietly, while I stood there like a log. Why??

[Next Chapter]

Chapter 17: The Will

[Next Chapter]

“This is my choice, and I choose myself. Not you, nor her! Solve whatever is between you yourselves, but I have my own life to live!” Yes, I haven’t yet been in a romantic relationship, I haven’t even met the man that I love, and I haven’t experienced the joy that everyone should enjoy.

He looked at me without emotion, not moving for a long time. I didn’t dare to move either. To tell the truth, I was still very afraid. He was a ghost! In my knowledge, ghosts could do anything, including taking away my life!

I really couldn’t bare his look at me anymore. I sniffled and stood up suddenly, shouting, “Even if you kill me, I won’t get involved!” I also had my bottom line, and that was untouchable. The first half of my life was ruined by my father, and the other half was my only hope.

“Kill you?” He looked at me sideways, but his expression was more like looking at a plaything, full of amusement. “I won’t, but Yun Li might make you wish you were dead!”

I paused, my stubbornness vanishing in a second. Although I didn’t know Stepmom really well, but as a girl only three years older than me who managed to marry into the Huo family and take control over everything, her methods..... Are pretty self explanatory!

“Well, I have already said what I needed to!” He pointed at his face, his eyes slightly squinting.

I knew what he meant. He will wait to see what happens. Even though I didn’t know the deeper meaning of his words, I felt it wasn’t good! But so what, I believe that no one would be so cruel as to kill an innocent person! So the only thing I needed to do now was to please Stepmom, then plead with her to let me leave.

And about this man in front of me right now! No, this ghost! I would try to stay as far as possible away from him.

I didn't know when he disappeared. Just when I finished planning what I should do next, he had vanished from the room. I'm sure he really vanished, because the temperature in room was back to normal, no more silence or coldness!

I don't remember when I fell asleep, but when I turned over sleepily, the sweet scent of the sea enveloped me.

The first thought coming to my mind was him! But I couldn't wake myself up, so I couldn't know if he was really there!

When I woke up in the morning, I carefully examined my body. Good! There wasn't anything that shouldn't be there. Today, I must try and talk to Stepmom again.

From asking Matron Wang, I found out that after breakfast, Stepmom would be in her study dealing with business of the Huo Corporation if she didn't go out. Looking at the door in front of me, I raised my hand hesitatingly, then lowered it. I had thought about what I was going to say for a whole morning, but it was still unknown if she would be willing to listen!

"Yun Li, maybe we should tell her the truth and pull her to our side, isn't that better?"

"Absolutely not! She's only a pawn. Even though she's just a country girl, but when faced with such a large fortune, no one is dumb enough to let go of such an opportunity!"

The sounds of arguing came from inside the study. I frowned. Those were the voices of Stepmom and Uncle Huo Ningen!

"Don't think of a good person like that. The larger the fortune, the more afraid she will be. She's only a country girl."

"Ningen! A woman's heart is like a needle in the sea, you never know where it is. I was also a country girl, but isn't the Huo Corporation in our hands now? Regarding that will, before I make a decision, you must never tell anyone. Nobody in this family can know of it's existence! Do you understand?" Yun Li's voice was pretty and sweet, sounding coquettish.

But I! Didn't have time to think about their dirty relationship, because all my attention was focused on the word "will"!

[Next Chapter]

Chapter 18: The Large Belly of a Lover

[Next Chapter]

“Miss Chen! Miss Chen! You..... ”

Matron Wang’s voice sounded from downstairs and I hurried away, afraid that Stepmom and Uncle might come out and see me, afraid that they will find out that I had overheard their conversation.

When I got to the first floor, I saw Matron Wang trying her best to block the way of a woman with a large belly!

“Call Yun Li out! Who does she think she is? This child inside my belly is the rightful heir to the Huo Corporation!” The woman was wearing a Western style maternity dress. Although her figure was bulky, you could still tell the clothes were pretty expensive.

Matron Wang was very anxious, her hands blocking the way fearfully yet carefully, all the while repeating, “Yes! Yes! I’ll go find Madame right now, can you please wait here for a while?”

Not until the big bellied woman sat down on the sofa did Matron Wang sigh, shook her head, and walked up the stairs. When she passed me, she only glanced at me. I nodded at her, but she didn’t respond. But before she got to the top of the stairs, I could already hear Stepmom’s voice.

“Chen Ningxin, what are you doing here?” The high heels on Stepmom’s feet clattered on the floor. Before she could walk down, I had already ran to the first floor and hid behind the stairs, not daring to make a sound!

“What am I doing here? I’m here to show you the rightful heir to the Huo Corporation!” The woman sitting on the sofa stood up, lifting her chin, and pointed to her slightly bulging belly.

Stepmom smiled, and sat down across from Chen Ningxin. “Ridiculous! The child’s the heir just because you said so? Get Huo Xiaoran to come and prove it! Who knows which man’s bastard is in your belly. And you have the audacity to come yell at the Huo house? ”

Bang! A loud noise sounded. When I looked over, I saw the front door pushed open by some sort of force. I almost forgot to breathe when crowds of people rushed in, flashing their cameras.

“Mrs. Huo! Is Miss Chen’s child really chairman Huo’s?”

“Rumors say that Huo Xiaoran, chairman Huo has died a month ago in a car accident. Is it true?”

“Please answer!”

“Mrs. Huo, because of chairman Huo’s death, will the Huo Corporation collapse?”

Numerous voices started speaking along with the flashing lights. I pulled my head back a little. I had seen such occasions on television, but this was the first time in real life!

The expression on Yun Li’s face flickered for an instant, but then she stood up gracefully, flipping her long hair over her shoulder, and gave an expert smile.

“Everyone! About chairman Huo, the Huo Corporation will soon hold a news conference and explain everything.”

As soon as Yun Li finished speaking, someone else shouted, “Then what about Miss Chen Ningxin? Rumors say that Miss Chen is pregnant with chairman Huo’s child. If chairman Huo did pass away, would Miss Chen become the heir to the Huo Corporation?”

I didn’t see who asked this question, but the woman called Chen Ningxin smiled like a flower, turning her slightly bulging belly towards the news reporters, changing the angle continuously, so everyone could see.

“Everyone! About whether the child of Miss Chen Ningxin is Huo Xiaoran’s or not, we can only wait until the child is born. But Huo Xiaoran already has a wife. So if Miss Chen insists that this child is chairman Huo’s, I can only say one thing, that Miss Chen would only be a lover, well-known but without a title!” Yun Li looked at Chen Ningxin and started laughing.

I stared at her, scared, reevaluating Stepmom in my heart. No wonder she could stand her feet in the Huo family, no wonder she could control the Huo

Corporation behind a curtain — so ruthless!

“Matron Wang, go ask Mistress to come down!” Yun Li’s voice was like thunder on a sunny day. I clenched my teeth, all my blood rushing to my head.....

[Next Chapter]

Chapter 19: The Rightful Heir

[Next Chapter]

When Matron Wang found me and pulled me out, the clicking of the lights surrounded and buzzed about my ears until Stepmom pulled me to her side. Her hand held my hand tightly.

“This, is Xiaoran’s legal wife. Come, greet everyone!” Stepmom’s smile was beautiful as she called me. But how could I speak, my panicked gaze couldn’t even find one safe spot to look at.

“Please tell us, when did you get married to chairman Huo?”

“Did you not know that Miss Chen Ningxin has always been chairman Huo’s girlfriend?”

“Now that Miss Chen is pregnant, what will you do about her child? Will you give the child his rightful title?”

“.....”

Hundreds of questions pelted me so that I didn’t even know which to answer first. I opened and closed my mouth, until the sound of laughter sounded besides me, “Yun Li! Where did you find such a counterfeit? Look at her rural appearance, how could Xiaoran marry her? Even if you want a counterfeit, shouldn’t you find a more legit one?”

But Yun Li only chuckled quietly. “My daughter-in-law is just a bit shy, but her marriage with Xiaoran was legalized a month ago! As to whether it’s true or false, I’m sure all of you have your own means to find out.”

Chen Ningxin’s almond-shaped eyes glared at Yun Li, but Yun Li only raised her brows, “Okay! Please leave now! As for the Miss Chen’s child which you all so care about, I don’t want to make statements too early. We’ll wait for her to give birth to the child! When the child is born, we can do a paternity test. If it really is a child of the Huo family, I will definitely take care of it. But the prerequisite is that it must be a child of the Huo family!”

The crowd started muttering among themselves. Some talked about whether

or not the child is from the Huo family, and some started pointing at Chen Ningxin. Chen Ningxin's face darkened, her gaze moving around, as if searching for something.

Trying to hide from the uncomfortable flashing lights, I also moved my gaze further. There, in the hallway to the dining room, I saw a black figure. Astonished, I realized that it was Aunt, the aunt that has never talked!

I remember her name was An Qiang. Turning my head, I saw that Chen Ningxin was also looking at An Qiang. There seemed to be some sort of relationship between them, but when I looked towards the hallway again, An Qiang had disappeared.

After the reporters left, Chen Ningxin didn't stay for long either. She threw down some threats and left. But she didn't look like a proud peacock anymore, instead like a wet dog without an owner.

"Zhaodi, come to the study!" Stepmom stood up and walked upstairs.

I didn't have a choice, following her like a pathetic little dog.

"Since you are public now, you'd better have some sense. Although....."

"Madame!" Matron Wang knocked on the door, interrupting Stepmom's words.

Stepmom glanced at the door, annoyed. I opened the door hurriedly, and saw that Matron Wang had brought a plate of fruits.

"Madame! This....." Matron Wang looked at Yun Li questioningly. Stepmom only told her to leave it, and Matron Wang left. Stepmom stood in front of the window, rubbing something onto her hands.

"Actually, I won't say anything unnecessary. Most importantly, you must know your place! Although I acknowledged you, you are still only a decoration, do you understand?"

I nodded. I knew that even without her saying it. Stepmom started to pick up the fruits on the plate, but because of the lotion or whatever on her hand, stopped and shook her head. I hurriedly picked up an apple and started peeling it with the fruit knife prepared there. I cut the apples and set them on the plate,

placing a fork besides them.

“Then I’ll be leaving now!” I want her to understand that I won’t become an obstacle; I won’t get involved in any of those conflicts.

[Next Chapter]

Chapter 20: Self-destruction

I became more and more afraid of nightfall, because I wasn't sure if "he" would come. And of course, also that stinky drunkard — Huo Xiaojin!

Opening the door to my room, I carefully examined the room for anyone else. Just when I was about to close the door, someone pushed me aside onto the wall. It hurt. I heard the door being locked and I shouted nervously, "Let me go!"

"Let you go?"

It was Huo Xiaojin's voice. His body pinned me on the wall, and even though I struggled for a long time and screamed till my face was red, it was no use.

"Why do you keep coming into my room! Let me go, do you hear?" His body was hot; I don't know if that's because he was drinking. But his breath besides my ear still smelt like sandalwood.

"Didn't you want to stay in the Huo family!" The smell of wine floated in my nose, making me extremely uncomfortable. But his voice had a faint sadness in it, and I frowned slightly.

His body suddenly became light, and before I could register what had happened, he fell the ground. He was breathing heavily, a very nasal sound, and moaning softly.

"What happened?" I turned around and poked him with my foot. No response. His expression was that of in pain. I don't know what happened to him, so I pulled open the door, wanting to get Matron Wang to take him away. But the house was very quiet. Stepmom had left in the afternoon, saying there was a banquet.

I walked around the house for a long time. There wasn't a single person!

What should I do? Let that drunkard sleep in my room? What would Stepmom think if she comes back? My thoughts were a mess. Why couldn't I find anyone in such a time!

"You look worried, huh?" The familiar voice sounded, still cold. Although I was

startled, but compared to before, I wasn't that afraid. Maybe I have gotten used to it.

He stood under the clock, his chin slightly raised. His tall frame was made perfect by the moonlight, but it's a pity that there was only empty space beneath his feet.

I didn't want to talk to him and turned around, preparing to leave. But his voice sounded once again, "Do you know your predicament now? From my point of view, you're just hiding from reality."

"What's wrong with your family? Can't you see these things have nothing to do with me? Why do you keep pushing me to the crest of the wave on everything? I only want a normal life, so why can't I!"

All the unhappiness, disappointment, and longing burst out of my heart and I screamed furiously, furiously! I glared at him angrily; all these started because of him! Tears fell out of my eyes. Why can't I? Why only I can't have a normal life?

He suddenly started laughing. His voice mixed with the pale light of the moon, seeming old and tired.

"True! Why is it only you?"

I didn't understand what he meant. We looked at each other until he started speaking again, "What? Jumping down even if you know it's a cliff? Not turning around even if you know you will be dead?"

I didn't understand anything he said. But since I already started talking, I decided to clarify everything at once.

"Why are you so obsessed with me? Aren't you a ghost? You can make those you hate take the blame easily, or kill them, or scare them to death, whatever. But why me?"

He turned around and looked at me. Only after a long pause did he reply, "If I just killed her right now, what would be the point?" Cold, icy cold, especially when he said this sentence, the emotion in his eyes made me shiver.

Chapter 21: Could He See

He disappeared right in front of my eyes, like a fog dissipating. His figure became hazier and hazier until it disappeared completely.

I stood there for a long time, looking at the spot where he used to be standing until a cold wind blew in the window. Everything that just happened seemed like a dream. I pulled my jacket tighter, my legs wobbling. Only when I took a deep breath did I calm down.

I returned to my room. Huo Xiaojin was still sleeping on the floor, but his red cheeks made me frown. Perspiration covered his forehead, his tightly closed eyes seeming in pain. Every once in a while he would shake his head violently, opening and closing his mouth, as if he wanted to say something but couldn't. His chapped lips brought compassion to my heart.

Only with all my strength did I manage to drag him onto the bed. Why did he seem so light the other day when I dragged him out of the room? He couldn't have put on some thirty pounds in just these days! Looking at his perfect body, I shook my head. No extra fat anywhere! Really!

I found a random towel, wrapped up some ice cubes found in the refrigerator and set it on his forehead.

"No, no, please, don't....." His voice was very weak, but these strange fragments made me unsure what to do.

I wiped off the perspiration from his forehead again, complaining, "Really, is there not a single normal person in this house? A full grown man, yet he has to come to my room every night to make such a big fuss. Can't you fall asleep without this fuss? Really!"

"Yun, no, I, I love you, please, don't!"

Watching him, I shook my head. I picked up the wrapped ice cubes and felt his temperature. The fever seemed to have left. I pulled the quilt around him and threw the ice into the sink in the bathroom.

"Now who did I offend!" I spoke coldly. Good, so what now? To prove my

innocence, I had to leave the door open. And my bed is now occupied by him, so where do I sleep?

“Little Jin!”

His voice sounded suddenly in the room, scaring me. I ran out the bathroom without completely wringing out the towel. But what I saw was him sitting besides Huo Xiaojin, his pale hand caressing Huo Xiaojin’s black hair. His face looked a bit painful and I chuckled coldly. So his face could show emotions!

Huo Xiaojin was still sleeping on the bed, but his expression relaxed, as if he was used to it. His slightly red cheeks even showed a sense of enjoyment! Watching such a scene, I felt it was sad but beautiful at the same time. I felt sorry for his death, and suddenly all the negative thoughts about Huo Xiaojin disappeared!

Instead, I felt sorry for him, my heart aching for him!

“Yun Li, I won’t let you live easily! Little Jin was so innocent, but now he’s in such a state. Everything was because of you, because of your greed!”

“Yun Li?” I asked, confused. But I covered my mouth the next second, because of the hatred in Huo Xiaoran’s eyes. Frightening, his gaze was too frightening, as if he was going to peel and eat me alive.

I wanted to say something to comfort him, but Huo Xiaojin, still lying on the bed, spoke first. “Elder brother!” He kept repeating, his hand moving to the top of his head. I sucked in my breath, amazed. Can Huo Xiaojin see him?

Watching Huo Xiaojin open his eyes slowly, my gaze got confused. I looked at the Huo Xiaojin with tears in his eyes, then looked at Huo Xiaoran who was still sitting on the edge of the bed.

“You..... ”

“Humph!” Huo Xiaojin’s gaze suddenly changed, and after glaring at me angrily, threw off the quilt and sat up before I could speak. He raised his his head slightly and looked at me. He wiped his forehead with his hand and said, “I warn you, leave the Huo family as soon as possible!”

Before I could ask anything, he actually walked out of the room himself. But

Huo Xiaoran waved his hand and slammed the door shut before I could respond!

Chapter 22: The Freedom Longed For So Long

Looking at my black eye circles in the mirror, I didn't even have the strength to complain. Last night, we stared at each other for a whole night again! I picked up a lip balm and put some on. Really, I talked more than I ever did last night. Why is everyone in the Huo family such a hassle! The living are a hassle, but the dead even more so!

Last night, I used up all my reason and saliva, only wanting him to know I don't want to get caught up in the conflict in the Huo family. But he behaved as if he didn't understand, only saying some baffling things. When dawn came, he disappeared without any notice.

Every time I thought about it I was furious. I was just about to throw the comb in my hand down when I heard Matron Wang's voice outside the door.

"Mistress, Madame says you can go back to school. The car is ready, waiting for you to come down.

"What? Okay!" I almost didn't realize what happened. I put up my hair casually and pulled open the door. Outside the door, Matron Wang stood there smiling, holding a pretty lunchbox which she passed to me.

"This is for you."

I accepted it and thanked her, then ran downstairs. I still had a chance, yes! It won't be like what he said, as long as I could get Stepmom to trust me, freedom such as this would get closer and closer to me.....

Able to go back to school, of course I was so happy I didn't care about anything else. But now my identity was the wife of Huo Xiaoran, and the pressure was much more than I anticipated.....

"Look! It's her! Did you look at yesterday's newspaper? Huo Xiaoran died! Do you think she's a bad sign for husbands? They just registered a month ago and now Huo Xiaoran's dead. What an unlucky person!"

"Shh! Quiet, what if she hears?"

“What are you afraid of, humph! I don’t even know if she’s fortunate or unfortunate!”

“Let’s go, let’s go!”

The two girls walked away slowly, but my heart was torn apart by something. I bit my lip, struggling to keep the tears in my eyes.

Actually, I’ve already heard words like these numerous times since I walked into the school. Even when I went back to my dorm just now, although my roommates didn’t say such sarcastic remarks, the expressions and the glances they exchanged weren’t any less damaging than these sentences.

“Xiaoya! Why are you alone?”

I lifted my head to the person besides me, and strained a smile, “Senior Yan, we haven’t met in a long time.” I bowed politely, but my heart started spasming painfully. The man in front of me was called Yan Bei, the same major as I was, but one grade higher than me. He was going to graduate this semester.

From when I entered the college as a freshman and saw him making a speech at the student council, I was fascinated by that solemn face, that handsome yet warm face. When he smiled, it was like the sun, chasing away the darkness in the deepest parts of my body.

“Xiaoya! Two days later, I will be leaving the school. The day after tomorrow, I want to invite you to a party. You must come!” Yan Bei said, stuffing a card into my hand, then left quickly.

Staring at his figure, I paused for a few seconds, until a familiar voice sounded by my ear, “So, you like him?”

Like the first few times, I really was scared. Him, whom I thought could only appear at night, was standing besides me right now, bending down to look at the card in my hand. His color was like previous times, phantom and pale!

“You?” I was startled, but the next moment, after getting surprised stares from around, I lowered my voice, “Why are you here?”

Huo Xiaoran straightened up, and after squinting, he raised his brows and lifted his finger. Only now did I see, there was a familiar red string tied on his ring

finger, but I couldn't see the other end. He started pulling the string up loop after loop, and finally I found, that my finger seemed to be tugged on by something.....

Chapter 23: His Woman

From that day on, I would glance at my finger from time to time. Although there was clearly nothing on my finger, that long red string was tied to his finger. I would never forget that string. It was on the day of my wedding, the string that the creepy old woman tied onto my finger!

“Mistress! The car is ready!” It was Matron Wang’s voice. Today was the day Yan Bei invited me to the party. Of course I would go, or I might not be able to see him anymore.

Even though it was romance that hadn’t yet started, I still wished, at least, to end it beautifully.

I got to the agreed place; it was a luxurious KTV in the city. Yan Bei seemed to have taken the biggest room. When I handed the card to the front desk, the waitress took me politely to the door of the private room.

Yan Bei was actually pretty rich. Heard that his father was in political office, and his mother’s family owned a powerful company. So I wasn’t at all surprised that he would choose to host his farewell party here.

Pushing open the door, I walked in. It was dark inside, and I couldn’t see anything, until with a bang, a beam of light lighted up the stage in the middle of the room. I could only faintly see someone standing there. Until my eyes got used to darkness could I see it was Yan Bei.

He didn’t talk but stood there, when something around his feet slowly lit up. When a heart shape appeared beneath his feet, I sucked in my breath. He took out a bouquet of flowers from his back, holding it in his hands. He smiled, that same smile he had when I first saw him, confident yet warm, like the sunlight.

I looked at him, staring dumbly, when applauses suddenly sounded besides me, and many people started shouting, “Together! Together! Together!”

“Xiaoya! As I become a real man, as I can take up responsibility, on this day, I want to tell you out loud, I like you!” Yan Bei’s voice was clear, like his smile, giving others the feeling of the sun. But I was already crying, my heart not

joyous, but painful.

If not for Father selling me into the Huo family, if I could be born in a ordinary household, if I could have a father who loved me, maybe I could have a beautiful married life with this man!

Around my ears, were my classmates' shouts, "Together!", but I didn't even have the courage to accept the flowers, until Yan Bei grabbed my hand.

"Xiaoya, I only want to ask or a year's time, I will let you see the man I become. At that time, I will take the ring of my lifelong commitment, and set it before you!"

"No! Why, why?" I screamed, my tears uncontrollable. I turned around and ran out. Why, why only I couldn't have love, why!

I didn't care about Yan Bei yelling my name behind me, but ran out of the building and came into a dark alleyway. Except for sobbing, I don't know what other way could alleviate the pain in my heart.

"So, women all like these kind of stuff!" I was already used to this cold voice, and I knew it was him — Huo Xiaoran! Other than him, who could appear silently besides me; and he, was the sharp thorn deeply buried in my heart.

I had just turned around when a warm hug surrounded me, Yan Bei's voice sounding by my ears, "Can you not cry? If I have troubled you, I'm sorry! I'm sorry!"

"No! No, it's not you!" I shook my head, but my arms moved around his waist, and I buried my head into his chest, greedily wanting more warmth. I knew clearly in my heart that this was what I wanted, he was what I wanted, but why, why did fate put this huge joke on me, why only we couldn't be together.

The next second, I took a deep breath, pushing him away abruptly, wiping off the tears on my face. I looked straight at Yan Bei, "I'm already married!" Yes, and the person who became my husband, was right here besides me! I glanced at the wall near me out of the corner of my eye. He was leaning against it, watching Yan Bei coldly. I couldn't describe the expression on his face, but it was not just cold.

But Yan Bei yelled loudly, "No! I know that's all false, how could you marry Huo Xiaoran? What registering a month ago, that's all false!"

It was the first time I saw Yan Bei like this. In my memory, he was always so calm, so steady, but the more he behaved like this, the more my heart hurt, as if it was being dug out of my chest forcefully. I also want to tell myself that those are all false, but that man was right besides me, constantly reminding me, that these were all true.

“It’s true! So..... ” After thinking for a long time, I still didn’t know how to confront Yan Bei. I could only keep my head lowered, repeating, “Sorry! Sorry!”

“No!” Yan Bei shouted furiously, pulling me into his arms again. He held onto me tightly, and I could only raise my head to look at him. Tears flowed out the corners of my eyes, and when I saw the tears glinting in his eyes, I started crying so hard I was shaking. His face expanded in my vision, getting larger, getting closer.

I was so nervous I didn’t know what to do, because Huo Xiaoran was still besides me! I knew Yan Bei couldn’t see him, but I could see him clearly. When I felt the coldness on Huo Xiaoran spreading, I started struggling.

“Let..... ” Before I could say “go”, my body was suddenly free, and Yan Bei was being lifted by some force and thrown against the wall, hard. When he fell to the ground, I started screaming, “No! No!” But along my screams, Yan Bei’s body once again floated into the air and was thrown against the wall fiercely.

“My woman! And he dare touch! Go die!” Huo Xiaoran’s voice was icy, even more frightening than when he talked about Yun Li. I was watching desperately, wanting to stop him, but not knowing how. Until Yan Bei’s fearful eyes closed slowly, I rushed over, holding onto him without caring about anything else.

“Stop! I’m not you woman, no!” I stared at him. The first time, my heart was filled with courage. Who was he to say that I was his woman!

He lifted his head and laughed coldly, his voice icy, “Well you to married me, and even if I don’t want you, you still can’t escape the fact of being my woman!”

“Let go!” His voice sounded like it came from hell. Not just icy, but tinted with death. I shut my eyes, shaking my head furiously, yelling, “No! Never!” A voice told me that if I let go now, Yan Bei would surely die.

“You!” Huo Xiaoran humphed coldly, “You won’t be able to escape! Don’t think

you can leave the Huo family! And I..... ” He stopped. When I looked over nervously, I saw the red string on his finger, and he was also gazing at it.

Chapter 24: Used As a Pawn

Yan Bei, unconscious, was taken to the hospital by some classmates who followed us out. I didn't even go, because of the cold and icy him behind me. I don't know why, but he started appearing more and more frequently beside me. Returning back to the Huo house, I never went back to school. I don't know what would be said of that day's happenings. I couldn't face it; I didn't have the courage to face it.

"Stepmom!" I knocked on the door of Yun Li's study. When her voice sounded inside, I pushed open the door and walked in.

Yun Li was sitting at her desk, managing some documents. After a long time, she lifted her head to look at me, "What's wrong?"

"I! I want to talk to you!" I said these words with difficulty, with much more difficulty than I thought. But since I already said them, I couldn't turn back anymore.

"Okay! Talk." She set down the pen in her hand and waited for me to start speaking again.

I had thought about this for a long time; I wanted to know if she could give me freedom. If staying at the Huo family was only for a matter of time, then I would stay here obediently until the day of freedom came. If she couldn't give me freedom, I would make other plans, but not wait here stupidly!

"The marriage with Huo Xiaoran, it's only a matter of time, right?" I asked in a small voice, but hope shined in my eyes.

Yun Li paused at first, confused, but then a rare smile appeared on her face, her voice still attractive like before, "Yes! When the right time comes, you can leave the Huo family!"

Sure enough! Hope, there really was hope. I saw my free future not far from me! I smiled, and bowed deeply to Yun Li, "Thank you!"

"You actually chose to believe her!"

Beside me, Huo Xiaoran's cold voice sounded. I almost turned my head to look at him, but Yun Li talked first: "Don't worry! Oh, right, come with me to the company tomorrow. Xiaoran's death will be announced tomorrow, and I wish you would be present. If they hear it from your mouth, the bothersome reporters wouldn't doubt your identity anymore."

I was shocked. I didn't expect to go with her to the Huo Corporation!

"Hahahaha....." Huo Xiaoran suddenly started laughing bleakly. I slanted my eyes to look at him, but didn't see him. He was there a minute ago! Without thinking too much about it, I turned my attention towards Yun Li. As long as there was a hope for freedom, I was willing to believe her. Regarding Huo Xiaoran, I was sure if I just had the chance to find that creepy old woman, everything will be resolved.

There must be a way to untie that red string!

This night, was the only night I didn't see him. It was as if he vanished suddenly, but surprisingly, I couldn't sleep, because my mind kept going back to that sentence: If you choose her, I won't let you see tomorrow's sun.

I believed that he wasn't joking, so I was very worried, worried that he will materialize in the night and take away my life, but he didn't appear at all that night.

In the morning, after breakfast, I came to the Huo Corporation with Yun Li. Yun Li had a grand air about her, her arrogant presence totally covering the fact that she was only three years older than me! Compared to myself, I deeply experienced what a world of difference meant.

The press conference was very simple. I still couldn't get used to the constantly flashing lights. Although my brain told myself to get a grip and not to panic like last time, there were still a few incidents throughout. But the good thing was that I had a script Yun Li prepared beforehand, and reading made me much more relaxed.

But I didn't think there would still be a board meeting after that!

"Today, everyone took the time to be here, so Yun Li thanks you!" Yun Li stood up and bowed slightly, then sat down and said, "Sitting here beside me, is the

wife of Xiaoran. I'm sure you have all heard about their marriage. I believe you all know the reason why I brought her today. With Xiaoran's death, his wife naturally becomes the first candidate for the next chairman!"

When Yun Li stopped talking, I stood up, and copying Yun Li's actions, I said, "Hello everyone, my name is Mo Xiaoya!" Since going into college, I have never used the name Mo Zhaodi again. When creating an ID during the first year in college, I changed my name to Mo Xiaoya. Not because I didn't like Mo Zhaodi, but because I don't like the man who gave me that name.

When I finished, the room started getting noisy. Some people started whispering, but I couldn't hear anything, because I was so nervous my ears were buzzing.

"We're letting such a little girl take over the Huo Corporation?" An old man sitting across from me spoke up, obviously very displeased at me.

I didn't even dare to face the cunning gaze of that old man. I knew that with Yun Li here, I didn't need to worry about anything!

"Elder Chen is correct, I'm also worried. You can tell right now that's she's not even grown up. How could we put the Huo Corporation into her hands!"

"I don't agree!"

The rest of the people also started clamouring. The first time being in such a situation, I got even more nervous. The smile froze on my face, and I even felt my forehead getting cold. I didn't know what to do, so I could only ask Yun Li to rescue me. But when I sent my pleading gaze to her.

I was shocked. Her face, that smile! That smile explained everything. I understood, this was the real reason Yun Li brought me to the Huo Corporation today. She wanted these people to see how vulnerable I am. This was the real reason!

"So you're not stupid! Did you see? This is what she wants. Only if you lower your head, can she have complete control of the Huo Corporation!" Beside my ear, an icy breath blew past. I was already used to these sudden appearances. I lowered my head, shut my eyes tightly, but repeated to myself in my heart, it's okay, as long as Yun Li can set me free, everything would be worth it.

“Madame Huo! Compared to this inexperienced young girl, I’m more willing to trust you. At least, in this month, when Xiaoran wasn’t here, the Huo Corporation didn’t fare worse under your management! And I also believe that you can lead the Huo Corporation up to a better level.” The old man who attacked me before seemed very open to Yun Li taking over.

Same as before, after the old man said this, the others all started talking. Everything was said, what about Huo Xiaoran was pushing the Huo Corporation to its death by making such a decision, what about Huo Xiaoran not bearing responsibility...

In short, everything possible was said, but all of them ugly. I suddenly realized, that although it was Yun Li who bought me into the Huo family, all the blame was put on Huo Xiaoran! I glanced at his face; no emotion! If he had no emotion, that meant things were going to get dangerous!

Chapter 25: Unexpected

I kept silent the whole time, shutting my eyes tightly, controlling my emotions. Yes, before I came here, I had already made up my mind, that no matter what ugly things were said, I must still bear with it. Only if Yun Li felt I was doing my part will she let me leave.

“What, even if no one approves of you, you will still stay in that position?” Someone shouted. I got a shock and opened my eyes, but met the contempt of all the board members below me.

I stood up abruptly, my fists tight, “Sorry, please excuse me.” Not waiting for Yun Li to say anything, I turned around and walked out. In the restroom, I slowly breathed in and out, releasing all the unhappiness suppressed in my heart.

“Do you still not see? She’s only using you as a disposable pawn!” Huo Xiaoran stood beside me, making my eyes fly wide open. This was the ladies room. Did he forget about gender after he died?!

After checking all around me nervously, I reminded him in a small voice, “This is for ladies only!”

“Xiaoya?” The door was pushed open, and I saw Yun Li walk in.

I turned around, opened the faucet, washed my hands, but kept looking at the Huo Xiaoran beside me while answering, “Yes, yes, I’m coming right now.” I pulled out some paper towels to wipe my hands. I was still very unused to being the only person able to see Huo Xiaoran. But what time this guy disappeared, I really didn’t notice.

“Are you okay?”

Yun Li blocked in front of me. The expression on her face was that of worry, but in her eyes, the flash of laughter didn’t go past unnoticed by me. I nodded, telling her I was fine, but Yun Li grabbed my hand and said, “Relax, those old men are just like that. To them, the Huo Corporation is their everything, so it’s normal for them to doubt your skills.”

I understood, she was testing me. After frowning slightly, I asked, “Why test

me, I have nothing to do with the Huo corporation. It's good they're all here today, I think it's better for me to explain it personally!"

Yun Li, looking worried a moment ago, suddenly nodded her head in satisfaction, her voice uncontrollably happy, "Yes, that's good, if you do so, you can have less pressure."

Arriving back at the conference room with Yun Li, another familiar face appeared. It was An Qiang, who had never spoken at home!

Sitting down, Yun Li's foot seemed to touch me accidentally. I understood, so before anyone could say anything, I stood up and looked straight at everyone, "Everyone, it's true that I'm unable to balance the Huo Corporation on my shoulder. So since everyone approves of chairman Yun, I don't disagree." Finishing my speech, I sat back down. I glanced at the faces below; most of them were smiling, of course except aunt An Qiang.

"I disagree!"

This was the first time I heard An Qiang talk. Her voice was cold, a coldness that seemed to originate in her bones. Her iciness could rival that of Huo Xiaoran.

"An Qiang, the An family had long since withdrew from the three largest shareholders of the Huo Corporation. Does your disagreement have any value?" It was still that old man who disapproved of me first. I really didn't understand why this old man Chen was so protective of Yun Li.

An Qiang slowly stood up, her long black dress wrapping her small frame tightly, her pale face white as a sheet under the contrast of her black clothes. Inside her dark eye circles, her eyes were still bloodshot.

"Everyone! I hope you didn't forget one thing, how Yun Li entered the Huo family. I believe I don't need to repeat it! And I hope, that after you've all seen this, you can still think Yun Li's goal is simple!" Saying these, An Qiang threw the stuff in her hand down onto the round conference table.

Chapter 26: Family Scandal

The board members began passing it around. When the booklet came to that old man, I saw him suddenly go pale. When the booklet finally came to Yun Li, I leaned over slightly to glance at it, but my eyeballs nearly fell out when I did.

There were a few pictures inside the booklet, and I knew the people in the pictures: it was Stepmom Yun Li and that old man Chen. Immediately, the whole conference room boiled, only quieting down when An Qiang began laughing coldly.

“So, everyone, although our An family has already dropped out from among the three largest shareholders, we are still paying attention to the Huo Corporation. I believe that regarding this, everyone, like me, isn’t dumb?”

“But handing the Huo Corporation over into the hands of an inexperienced little girl is the same as suicide!” Someone shouted out loud.

From the beginning to the end, Yun Li didn’t speak. And I wasn’t going to put a foot in it either. It was very obvious that this was between An Qiang and Yun Li; only an idiot would stand forward between them at this time.

“Of course, everyone’s worry, is also my worry. So Mo Xiaoya will only be in the position of chairman of the Huo Corporation temporarily. Half a month, how about using half a month as the time limit, and we can vote again on the next shareholder meeting?”

An Qiang’s behavior right now really scared me. I never thought that a person never talking at home actually shamed Stepmom here so heavily. Will it ever be peaceful at home then? Actually, looking back, from the time I entered the Huo family, there was never peace in the house.

Until the meeting ended, Yun Li never said one more word. But An Qiang, I actually saw a rare smile on her face. From entering this family, except for hate, there was only extermination in her eyes.

After returning Huo house, Yun Li shooed me away with a dark face, then told Matron Wang to go find uncle Huo Ningen. Of course, Yun Li couldn’t come back

with An Qiang. So I had just finished climbing the stairs when I saw An Qiang coming through the door.

My room was the only room that needed to go past Stepmom's study. I don't know why she put me there; I was the only person living on the entire third floor.

Passing by the study, I heard arguments coming from inside. Originally, I didn't mean to stop, but Huo Xiaoran, who should not have appeared, materialized in front of me.

He nodded his head towards the study. I understood what he meant.

"Can't you not even control your wife? Huo Ningen are you still a man?" Along sides Stepmom's furious voice, something broke.

"Yun Li, you know this isn't my fault! And I've heard, that you actually have a thing with that old man. I really admire you!" Uncle's voice was sour. But having seen those pictures, I did want to say the same things as Uncle. That wrinkled old man; regarding Stepmom's courage, I had to admit defeat.

"She followed me, she actually followed me! And you didn't know anything about it? Or maybe you told her to? Huh?"

"Are you crazy? We are the ones on the same battle line! You know, I'm not only one of your bedmates, but your real teammate! Yun Li?" Uncle seemed hasty to explain. But suddenly, all went quiet. After some time, I actually heard Stepmom's soft sighing.

I couldn't eavesdrop anymore. This time, I didn't go around Huo Xiaoran, but directly through him. Was this what he wanted me to know? That Uncle and Stepmom were lovers! And so reckless in this house!

I didn't even leave my room for dinner. He sat in front of my desk, not moving an inch.

"This is what you want? To become her pawn?" From the time we sat down, this was his first question.

"What else? What else can I do? Stay in this family forever? My eyes open but pretending not to see? What do you and Yun Li want? I have nothing, what do you want from me?" I started yelling, my face getting red, until someone

knocked on the door.

“Xiaoya? Are you there?”

Aunt? An Qiang? I didn’t expect for her to come! Opening the door, I saw her with some food. Before I could say anything, she walked in herself.

“You didn’t come down for dinner, and I was a little worried about you, so I’ve brought you some.” Setting the plate on the table, she eyed the pulled out chair, but I sat down on it firmly.

Maybe she heard my angry yells at the door. I saw something from her puzzled gaze, so to avoid suspicion, I could only sit on that chair, although Huo Xiaoran was sitting on it!

Cold. I felt like if I was in a freezer. Fortunately, it was only for a little while before he left the chair and stood to the side, watching An Qiang.

“Uh, thank, thank you!” I didn’t know what to say to her. I dragged the plate of food over and started eating.

“Xiaoya, I beg you, please help me!” Suddenly, An Qiang grabbed my hand. Her puffy eyes were full of tears.

Caught off guard, I didn’t know what to do, swallowing the food in my mouth without chewing. I watched as she stood up, then took off her clothes. I stared unbelieving at the marks on her body. They were fresh and red, some places even swelling. When I touched them gently, her body started trembling.

“Was it him?” I could almost see my childhood; my drunk father often beat me for no reason. Except for Uncle Huo Ningen, I didn’t know who else could do this to her!

Tears falling down her face, An Qiang turned to look at me, and nodded. I knew, Uncle must have done this because Aunt shamed Stepmom publicly this morning.

As Aunt was putting on her clothes, I looked towards Huo Xiaoran, who had been standing aside all along. His face was cold, and I couldn’t tell what he was thinking. But he didn’t have an reaction to the wounds on An Qiang’s body.

“Help me! Xiaoya, you must help me! This is my family. I must protect my

dignity, my marriage, my everything!” She sobbed forlornly. When she lifted up her head, her eyes were almost completely red.

“Before Yun Li appeared, I was so happy. Ningen loved me, but after that woman came, everything changed! She wants to hold the Huo Corporation in the palm of her hand, but Ningen just wants to protect his family business, so he could only submit to her!”

Listening to An Qiang’s words, my thoughts were messy. All I could think of were the wounds on her body. “I, I..... ” I didn’t know how to comfort her. But to her plea, I really was helpless.

“Don’t refuse me! This time, only you, only you can help me!”

“How can I help you? I, I’m only a decoration.” I said directly. Even though my heart really hurt for her, I was unable to do anything.

An Qiang suddenly grabbed my hand tightly, “I’ve noticed you. Didn’t you always want to leave the Huo family? Haven’t you always wanted freedom? Unless you can escape out of her hands, neither of us can live peacefully! I’ll help you, help you leave the Huo family. There’s only this one chance, we’ll take the Huo Corporation away from her, and then she won’t be able to restrict you anymore. Then, you can walk out the front door of the Huo house, even leaving clean and innocent.”

Clean and innocent! These two words were obviously an extravagant hope for me. The words clean and innocent had left me the day I married into the Huo family.

“I..... ” I hesitated. To tell the truth, I wasn’t even sure myself if I would be able to get my freedom from Yun Li. But An Qiang’s words just now became a sharp thorn in my heart, a thorn that awakened me.

An Qiang was anxious, seemingly wanting to say something else, but at the end, she still didn’t say it. She walked out, her face pale, her gaze pleading.

Sitting on the chair, I pulled a piece off a piece of bread and put it in my mouth, but I couldn’t taste its flavor at all.

“Huo Xiaoran, what really happened in your family?”

Standing besides the desk the whole time, Huo Xiaoran's expression was still cold and dead, only his voice showing a hint of a rare, icy smile, "You believe what your eyes see? So it seems like the one-on-one situation has changed. She still couldn't resist turning you into one of her pawns!"

"Pawn?" I looked at him in surprise. These days, I experienced way too much, and my mind was too messy to determine who was real and who was fake. I knew he was talking about An Qiang, but as a woman with such a history, would she really treat me as just a pawn? I was confused. Just one second ago, I almost believed her.

Her injured body. I thought about what I overheard when I passed by the study, and my guesses about what happened inside. Connecting the two, Uncle hitting her would be reasonable! Or was that fake too?

"You still have a chance now. Since you are legally my wife, I want to give you a friendly reminder, or else you won't even have bones left!" He laughed coldly, then continued, "All say that three women constitute a show. So let me watch this show with interest, or wouldn't life be too boring?"

He vanished the same time his voice did. Just when I wanted to ask some more and turned around, he was already gone! I was really curious about what happened in the Huo family every person envied. Under their peaceful surface, were such waves and whirlpools.

Before I could return to my senses, the door to my room was pushed open heavily by someone. Looking at the person in the doorway, I really was speechless!

"Huo Xiaojin! What do you want now?" I was furious. As the saying goes, a panicked rabbit can also bite. Even if I was rabbit, I was almost pushed to the point where fangs were starting to grow!

His long body leaned against my doorframe. I hated that face so similar to Huo Xiaoran with all my being, and the words out of his mouth nearly caused me to choke to death on my bread!

"What do I want? I want to do the duties of my poor older brother!"

Chapter 27: Showing Who's Boss

Last night, after chasing away the drunkard Huo Xiaojin, I still wasn't able to sleep well, because Huo Xiaoran stayed in my room the whole night. I was afraid something like last time will happen, so I stared my eyes wide open the whole night, because I was scared!

After breakfast, I went to the company together with Stepmom. Obviously, Stepmom was still upset over yesterday's happenings, her face dark. And I became a lost puppy. Stepmom didn't even talk to me.

Watching Stepmom press the button for the top floor, I didn't ask anything, just followed. Out of the elevator, Stepmom left without giving any directions. Looking at the reception's desk not far away, I let out a long breath. Seems like I can only go there.

"Hi!" I smiled at the pretty girl standing behind the desk, feeling very lowly; I wasn't just a little bit shorter than her.

"Hi! May I ask who you are looking for?" The pretty girl's smile was very standard. She wore a fitting short skirt, her working card hanging around her neck. She even bended down a little towards me.

Looking at the pretty, delicate face full of makeup, I felt once again defeated. Only after some time did I say, "Uh, I, I'm Mo Xiaoya!" Finishing my sentence awkwardly, I saw the smile freeze on the receptionist's face.

"What? Oh! Yes! This way please, your office is this way!"

She led the way, and I followed closely behind. The Huo Corporation was a very large company for producing and marketing make-up products. There were many child brands under the company, the most famous being Hotday, a brand that only produces a limited number of each product. This brand was a luxurious item all the fashionable and upper class young girls chased after.

Of course, I only saw a few glances of it on television, but now I'm in the Huo Corporation. To think about it, it really was unbelievable.

The office was very spacious, even luxurious. After the receptionist girl closed

the door, I heard an uproar outside. I knew, it must be because of my appearance. True, a person like me, sitting here, did look like a joke.

Almost the whole morning, I sat there doing nothing. No one brought anything in. In truth, I knew that all those would be sent to Stepmom Yun Li's office. Well good, I like the peace!

"Is sitting here by yourself interesting?" His cold voice sounded. I didn't think it was strange.

I glanced at him sitting on the sofa and also chuckled coldly, "It is interesting. Although I don't look like the crown prince by wearing an imperial robe, but at least I wore it once, right?"

"Interesting!" His tone sounded like he was watching a show, looking forward to it yet disdainful! Very conflicting. When I turned to look at him, he already disappeared.

Originally, I thought I could be left in peace, but just a few minutes later, Yun Li came, the person behind her carrying a stack of folders. She didn't knock; Yun Li barged in.

"Look over these. If there's no problem, then sign them!" Yun Li waved her hand, and the person behind her set all the folders onto the desk in front of me, a thick stack!

"This?" I looked towards Yun Li, confused. I already made my position clear before, telling her that I didn't want to get involved with the Huo Corporation. She was pretty happy then; what came over her today?

Yun Li didn't even glance at me. She flipped her hair and said, "I heard that An Qiang promised to help you, so these, are your responsibilities!" Finishing her sentence and before I could realize what happened, she left.

Looking at the stuff in front of me, I was surprised. She knew that An Qiang came to find me last night? How? No one went up the third floor. Except for me, there was only that damn ghost in the room. Or did An Qiang tell her? No matter how I thought about it, this incident seemed like a mystery, unable to unravel or guess the answer.

But this pile of stuff in front of me..... I knew this was Yun Li showing me,

telling me, that no matter at home or at the Huo Corporation, she was the boss. I didn't even flip through the folders. I picked the stack up with some difficulty, and made my way to Stepmom's office by asking along the way.

I knocked on the door, and waited for a response before entering. I set all the folders on the desk to the side, smiling helplessly, "Stepmom, yesterday, Aunt did come find me, but I know I'm only a decoration." Seeing the pleased smile on Stepmom's face, I let out a long breath in my heart.

"It's not Stepmom putting you into a difficult position, but that woman An Qiang, you should keep your distance from her. Don't believe what she says; her heart is darker than you can imagine. Do you hear?"

I nodded. Looking at the rare smile on her face, I thought she was in a good mood. As the saying goes, strike the iron while it's hot, so I also smiled and asked, "Stepmom, I'm useless in the Huo family, so when....."

"I know, don't worry!" She cut me off impatiently, waving her hand, signalling for me to get out. Helpless, I could only leave.

"Look! That's that legendary Mo Xiaoya!"

"Really, there really is such a person. So atypical!"

"Shh!"

When I walked past, their gazes were still on me. Although I was uncomfortable, what could I say? There was a cafeteria in the company, but I didn't go there for lunch, because I didn't want to be in a place where there were crowds anymore. I didn't plan to go back in the afternoon either. I haven't been out for a long time; the Huo house was the same as a cage to me.

I walked on the streets boredly, but saw a familiar figure. Not anyone else, but Chen Ningxin, who came to the house the other day and made a big commotion, the woman who was rumored to be pregnant with Huo Xiaoran's child. Just a few days not seeing, and her belly was even larger than before.

I stopped, watching her enter the coffee shop by the sidewalk. Curious, and before I could decide what to do next, something even stranger happened right in front of my eyes. An Qiang's car! Made a turn and drove into the parking lot beside.

“Coincidence?” I mumbled to myself.

“You think it’s a coincidence?”

His abrupt voice scared me. This was on the busy streets, yet this fellow stood beside me blatantly.

I glanced at him, speaking in a small voice, “She’s pregnant with your child!” I pretended to lower my head, searching for something in my bag, because I was afraid of people seeing me and thinking I was mad.

“Really?” He laughed coldly, but his eyes were looking into the distance. After some time he spoke again, “A friendly warning, in the Huo family, you should choose to trust me. An Qiang and Yun Li, with them, you would probably never get any benefits.”

In my eyes, no one in the Huo family was a fuel-efficient lamp. But why was all the fire concentrated on me made me helpless.

All say enemies will definitely meet, and this time, I believed it completely, because in the car that just stopped in front of me, was Huo Xiaojin! A coquettish beauty was sitting in his passenger seat, her career line¹ almost bottomless.

“What? Became a puppy no one wants?” Huo Xiaojin took off his sunglasses and looked at me, the corner of his lips curving upward.

“Go away!”

Looking at that face, anger exploded in me. When he had a fever, I cared for him so meticulously. Was I sick that day? Such a detestable person; I should have let him died a thousand times!

“Who is this, throwing a temper at Master Huo. Heedless of consequences?” The fair, soft arm of the woman made its way up Huo Xiaojin’s shoulder, the sound coming out of those bright red lips able to numb a person all the way to their bones.

I looked at the scene inside and shook my head. I glanced at the Huo Xiaoran beside me, and chose to ignore him without saying anything. Compared to Huo Xiaojin, this ghost beside me, was much more cuter. At least he didn’t make me

detest him!

In front of me, the car door was opened, and Huo Xiaojin ordered, "Get out!"

"Master Huo?" The voice of the woman increased in pitch as she glared at me. I just raised my brows; what the heck did it have to do with me?

When Huo Xiaojin got off the car himself and pulled out the woman in the passenger seat, I was scared and backed up a few steps. But before I could realize what happened, he stuffed me into the car.

"What are you doing!" I shouted, wanting to open the car door.

But the next second, watching the buildings speed past my eyes, I gripped the handle of the door nervously!

"Are you crazy! I don't want to die yet!" He was driving way too fast. The car weaved through traffic. Every time he passed another car, my heart almost jumped out of my throat.

In the end, I could only yell and shout with my eyes closed, until the piercing sound of brakes sounded. Then his breath puffed out into my face, and when I opened my eyes, I almost screamed at the face that was zero inches away from me.

"Go away! What do you want?" I pushed at his body, wanting to increase the distance between us.

At first, I expected him to make some rude move, but instead, a very serious expression was on that usually flirtatious face. He looked at me for a long time, his body not moving, until he asked in a deep voice, "What is your real purpose for coming into the Huo family?"

I paused. What did he mean by my purpose?

"Don't think I don't know, my brother doesn't even know you! What marrying a month ago, that's impossible. Yun Li can trick everyone, but not me!"

"You're crazy!" I used my whole strength to push him away. That face; I really wanted to slap him awake!

"Did you think I wanted to enter the Huo family? I was bought by Yun Li! Do you know now? Bought! And my only purpose is to leave the Huo family!" I

almost roared out the whole sentence.

Watching the disbelief on his face, I got even madder. Was the Huo family very prestigious? That everyone wanted to enter? He was much too arrogant.

“If possible, I want to leave now, immediately! Instantly! I don’t ever want to return to that cage again, don’t ever want to watch her mood again!” Not to mention there’s this mad person who makes a fuss in my room every night! At last, I still didn’t say this sentence out loud.

He chuckled coldly, his gaze moving over me before saying, “Don’t say it as if someone tied a rope to you.”

I was completely angered, my face flushed as I yelled at him furiously, “I tell you Huo Xiaojin, if not for Yun Li threatening me, that without her permission I wasn’t allowed to leave, if not for her threatening me with the power of the Huo Corporation, I would have left long ago! You really think your Huo family is a golden apple? Well I, Mo Xiaoya, do not care!”

But he only looked at me in surprise, and never said another word.....

1. Career line: the line between the breasts of a woman (supposedly big boobs help with a woman’s career lol).[☞](#)

Chapter 28: Should I Thank or Hate

Night came again. Today, my room was unusually quiet. I sat by the desk, scribbling in my journal; sometimes I didn't even remember what I just wrote. Looking up, I glanced out the window. The moon was very round, very bright. The full moon that appeared once a month happened to be today.

"So strange!" I mumbled. It really was strange. Usually, by this time, someone would have started making a fuss outside my door, but today it was so quiet it was creepy. I felt as if a thunderstorm was coming, an indescribable agitation in my heart.

When the clock struck twelve, I let out a small breath. Rare, so rare; Huo Xiaojin that drunkard didn't come, and that damn ghost Huo Xiaoran was nowhere to be seen either. Maybe he knew that I wouldn't get tangled in his business, so he went to find someone else?

I set down the pen, about to close my journal, when I suddenly realized my body temperature was much too high! And this high temperature seemed to come instantly, without any forecast.

My body started to feel numb and weak. I breathed in and out quickly, walking towards the door. Although it was such a short distance, I spent a long time getting there and opening the door.

"Matron, Matron Wang!" I shouted, my voice echoing in the hallway. Just when I wasn't able to support my body and slumped to the ground, I saw her figure appearing at the stairway, and thanked the heavens.

"Mistress, what happened?" Matron Wang pulled me into her arms, her hand moving to my forehead. Maybe because she felt my burning temperature, her face paled instantly.

"Madame! Madame!" She yelled. Not long after, Stepmom walked up in her nightdress.

"What are you yelling about in the middle of the night?" Obviously, Stepmom was woken up, her face upset. But Matron Wang hadn't even begin telling her

my situation when Stepmom turned around to leave. After a few steps, she instructed Matron Wang, “Take her back to her room. After tonight, there won’t be any more trouble!”

“Madame?”

I saw the worriedness on Matron Wang’s face. After she asked in confusion, she looked back towards me, distressed, keep trying to use her hand to lower my temperature.

Right now, I couldn’t talk anymore. But I could see the calm expression on Stepmom’s face, as if she knew that I would become like this beforehand.

“Carry her back, don’t be meddlesome!” Looking at the ruthlessness on Stepmom’s face, I really was baffled. Before, I truly believed, that if I was a good pawn, she will return freedom to me. But what about now? What did everything happening right now mean? I started doubting. My body felt like it was on fire; my blood even started to boil like hot water.

My eyes red, tears fell down my face, and my vision blurred. I felt Matron Wang’s hand wiping my face, seeming to wipe my tears away. Then my vision went completely dark. I couldn’t see anything; although my eyes were open, I couldn’t see anything.

Lying on the bed, the burning pain already spread out from my body, expanding over my skin. I felt as if I was in a pot of boiling water. I pulled up the corners of my mouth coldly. I had a feeling, from the depths of my heart, that I won’t be able to live past tonight!

“Do you see reality now?”

Huo Xiaoran’s voice sounded by my ear. His cold breath touched my skin, and immediately, I felt much better. I don’t know why, but because of that feeling, I actually found some strength. I don’t recall how my hand climbed onto him, but that’s what happened.

When my skin touched him, the pain seemed to teleport away, vanishing! When close to death, humans always become true to themselves, yes! Even me.

Greedily, I encircled him greedily, wanting to lay him on top of me. Although I could hear his low sigh, I still acted according to my own account, my hands

moving over his body recklessly.

Hot, I was very hot, I needed his coldness to ease the extreme pain of my body. “Save, save me!” I used up all my strength to say it. It sounded like a low mumble.

“Yin gu¹ that is originated from me; of course only I can save you.”

Although his voice was still icy, to me, it didn’t sound like before anymore. Instead of being frightened, I accepted it and was much more relaxed. But I was stunned by the two words he said, “yin gu”. In my life, I had never heard of those kind of stuff. Gu, wasn’t that the legendary, creepy existence?

His cold lips started on my forehead. Don’t know if it was because of the kisses, but my body started trembling. Nervous, my body became uncontrollably nervous. The scene of the first night appeared in my mind; I was scared, scared that it might happen again. My brain told me no, to push him away, but my honest body pulled him even closer.....

Even though his kisses fell clearly on my face, even though I felt his hand moving on my body, even though I knew perfectly that that first night, was really him!

But I still wanted more. The first time, I struggled deep inside my heart. He was a ghost, a being that should not exist on this world. Why could he touch me like this, and why would my heart start beating again after his touch, and why would my body also start getting excited because of a ghost!

I shut my eyes tightly and felt him. Like last time, his unique, faint, sweet smelling scent like the oceans floated into my nostrils. I felt his cold touch graze over my skin, but it was different than last time. He was..... very gentle.

Beside my ear, his breathing labored, and I arched my body in response to the strange excitement in my body. After a muffled humph, he stopped, then just lay on me, not moving.

I don’t know how to respond to this situation. The first time, I just thought I had a dream; but this time, I couldn’t use a dream to explain it anymore, because it really happened. And this time, I truly experienced it. My eyes were shut tightly; I had to keep my eyes shut, pretending that none of this had

happened.

“For how long will you keep pretending?” He suddenly disappeared off me, and then his voice sounded by my ear. But my face was red and I immediately pulled the quilt up over my head.

“Go away! You go away!” I yelled. Right now, I was extremely conflicted. I have not yet decided what to do, so I didn’t want him pestering me.

Mo Xiaoya, are you crazy, how could you do this with a ghost, what about your life? After yelling, I didn’t hear his voice again. After a long time, I poked my head out from under the quilt, because if I continued like that, I might suffocate under the covers.

Looking around, he was finally gone. Before I can understand what happened to my body, I do not want to see him.

Wrapping the quilt around me, I walked into the bathroom. Looking at the bruises all over my body, my fists tightened. What happened to me, Stepmom, it must be Stepmom! Stepmom’s expression on the stairway floated into my mind.....

“Stepmom must have done something to me!” Even though I was naive, I wasn’t stupid!

“Well, well, well, so you’re not idiot!”

“You!” Because of his sudden appearance, I abruptly sank my body into the tub, hugging myself nervously. I pretended that the blush on my face was because of the hot water in the tub.

He appeared on the sink top, his upper body leaning against the mirror. But from my perspective, it was very creepy, because there was nothing in the mirror he was leaning against, even though he was sitting right there. I controlled myself desperately, trying not to think about the mirror. But when my eyes met his, I found that his intent gaze made me even more frightened.

“What’s wrong with me?” I asked. I don’t know why, but I just felt he had the answer, that he knew something.

Crossing his long legs and swinging them, he smiled coldly, “On the day of the

wedding, someone planted yin gu on you, and I am your antidote.”

“Yin gu?”

“That’s right!” He lifted his head slightly, and only now did I realize, he really was handsome! That face, complete able to steal the hearts of all girls. No wonder Huo Xiaojin, who looked so similar to him, could have different beauties in his arms every day. Regarding Huo Xiaojin, I have already heard numerous sayings about him just over the span of a few days.

Those who leapt into his arms, not only were working women who wanted to fly up the branch and become a phoenix, but also those young ladies from rich and prominent families. But he was known for his one night stand! Just one night; after one night, he would not have anything to do with any of them anymore. I didn’t understand why he would do this, but.....

My gaze fell on Huo Xiaoran’s face. What about him? Was he also like that?

“Before you even came here, Yun Li had thought out how to dispose of you. Yin gu, if you don’t have the antidote for it, on each night of the full moon, you will be poisoned, until your life withered away. And then, medically, you died naturally!”

“What?” The night of the full moon? Thinking back, the two times I had a relationship with him were both on nights of the full moon! Then he! I looked at him. He wasn’t taking advantage of me, but keeping me alive?

“Why, why would she do this, I, I have said clearly, I don’t want want to be here, I don’t want to tangle up in the Huo businesses, I even stated my position in front of everyone at the company, despite their scoffing! Why would she do this?” Regarding Stepmom, I realized a serious problem. From the beginning, did Stepmom plan to not let me leave the Huo family alive?

“Why? Because she needs someone to inherit my will that even she herself doesn’t know about, and she wants to change the Huo Corporation to become the Yun Corporation!”

Hearing this, I really didn’t know whether to hate everyone in the Huo family, or to thank this already dead ghost in front of me!

1. Yin gu: a type of poisonous parasite, from the other side (like ghosts); only high level

people are able to breed and control them.[↩](#)

Chapter 29: The Creepy Wedding (I)

“Achoo!” I wiped my nose. This was the thirty-seventh sneeze after I came out of the tub. And the culprit was this unreal man who was sitting in mid-air, looking at me arrogantly. Because back in the bathroom, he refused to leave, so the water in the tub turned freezing, so..... I caught a cold!

“What about it? Cooperate with me!” He asked.

I glanced at him, hesitating. Him? I don’t know why, but I have this feeling, that I shouldn’t get too close to him. There’s a strange feeling in my heart that I can’t describe, but it was dangerous. Yes, I must stay far away from danger: “No!”

“No? We are grasshoppers on the same string; you can’t escape, and I can’t run away either.”

I knew he was talking about the Yin gu. Thinking about it, my face that finally calmed down blushed red again. Nobody could imagine that feeling, so creepy and magical, yet I actually found that I didn’t dislike doing it with him! My body even felt very satisfied. I started to detest myself in my heart.

He just frowned, looking at me, as if expecting me to answer, but I was wholly focused on chasing away the images in my mind.

“Are you saying that although you know clearly that she won’t let you live, you still want to stick with your idea?”

“I.....”

Yes, after this night, I finally understood what kind of a person Yun Li was. She wasn’t how she looked; her heart was much more cruel and ruthless than her actions. Wanting to find a way out in hands of people like her was extremely hard. Plus, she never planned on letting me leave here alive.

An Qiang! This was the first name that appeared in my mind. Right, there was still her. Even though I know Yun Li didn’t want me to live, but I still didn’t want to take revenge and such; I only wanted to leave this place, leave him! I glanced at his face. Him and me, no matter dead or alive, were people in two worlds, and

should not be together. Everything that happened was just a mistake.

“I’m tired!” I buried myself deeply under the covers.

His voice didn’t sound again. When I was sure he really left, I lifted up my head from the quilts.

Was An Qiang worth trusting? Would she turn into a second Yun Li? That pale face and bloodshot eyes appeared in my mind. Her bruised body, she shouldn’t.....

Waking up sleepily, I glanced at the clock beside my bed. It was already twelve o’clock noon; why didn’t Matron Wang come wake me up? The hunger in my stomach made me unable to lie in bed anymore. I got up, planning to fill my belly first.

Just when I got to the second floor, I heard Stepmom’s voice from downstairs.

“If she still doesn’t stir till evening, you can go clean up!”

“Madame, but..... ” Matron Wang answered, sounding conflicted.

“But what? She died from disease. You only need to find her, then tell the true circumstances. Leave the rest to me.”

I opened my mouth wide with shock, were they talking about me? To clean me up?

“Yes!” Matron Wang agreed. I saw her sigh lowly, then turn to come upstairs. But I just stood there, forgetting to react.

“Mis-, Mistress?” Matron Wang looked at me, her expression frightened, and fear also flashed across Stepmom’s eyes. My heart, which was still nervous a moment ago, suddenly calmed. I looked at Matron Wang and nodded, walking down slowly.

“Sorry to make Stepmom worry, I just caught a cold yesterday!” I walked down naturally. Matron Wang still stood at the bottom of the stairs silently. Only when I passed by her did she look like she suddenly woke up.

Yun Li walked towards me swiftly, squinting slightly. After looking me over, she said, “I’m glad it’s nothing! I’m glad it’s nothing! Quick, Matron Wang, prepare some food.” This was Yun Li; clearly a minute ago she was talking about cleaning

up my body, but a second later she could pretend nothing had happened.

After Matron Wang went into the dinning room, I noticed a black figure, An Qiang!

“Sister-in-law, this is the invitation my dad wants me to give you!” An Qiang put a down red invitation on the table, not directly handing it to Yun Li.

Yun Li smiled coldly, twisted her snake-like waist as she walked over and picked it up, her mouth not stopping, “An Ming is getting married? That’s not easy! Just this time, for how long can this bride live?”

I frowned. For how long can the bride live? What did she mean?

“You!” Aunt bit her lip and wanted to retaliate, but after a “you”, she fell silent. Until she had almost walked away, did I hear her say: “This time, my younger brother will definitely protect her!” Before Yun Li could say anything else, she left.

Yun Li smoothed her clothes. Holding the red wedding invitation, when she passed by me, she stuffed the invitation to me, “I don’t have time to go, so you go represent the Huo family. After all, you are the mistress of the Huo family.”

I looked at Stepmom in confusion, but couldn’t find anything useful in her expression. When she walked upstairs slowly, I fixed my gaze on the invitation. What did Yun Li mean by this? Did she accept me finally?

Unexpectedly, the wedding was very far away! And Stepmom didn’t let me just go by myself; that drunkard Huo Xiaojin was also going! I stared at him. From that day on, he never appeared at home. And today he looked much more serious.

“Are you finished looking!” Huo Xiaojin glanced at me.

I hurriedly looked out the window, as if someone caught my tail, “Why are you going?”

“Are you really stupid or pretending to be stupid? The An family, although they’re no longer one the three largest shareholders of the Huo Corporation, their shares can still bring much effect. Just letting you go? That old man in the An family, who views face more than anything, will be comfortable? Do you

really think your mistress title is accepted?” He laughed. I heard the contempt in his laugh.

His words were like a bucket of cold water. I thought Stepmom accepted me, but I was still only a disposable decoration. In other words, if she doesn’t accept me, she would still be thinking about taking my life. There were too many questions in my heart. I looked around, but didn’t find that familiar figure — Huo Xiaoran!

This made me feel very strange. Every time Huo Xiaojin was present, he seemed to appear rarely!

The car ride took a whole five to six hours. When Huo Xiaojin’s stylish sports car stopped, we were already at a magnificent mansion. In front of the mansion, twenty to thirty luxurious cars were parked neatly. I couldn’t recognize any of the brands, but their fancy looks already showed their expensive prices.

Walking through the green grass, we came to the large yard. It was decorated very sophisticatedly, and there were lots of people!

“Master Huo!”

A man in a white suit walked up, smiling warmly, and shook hands with Huo Xiaojin. After some conversation, he looked towards me, “This is?”

“Mo Xiaoya!” When Huo Xiaojin’s voice sounded, even I was startled. I thought he would say Huo Xiaoran’s wife or something, but he actually said my name. Slightly, there was some gratitude in my heart. At least he gave me some infrequent respect.

“The wife of Xiaoran! So nice of you to come! I’m An Ming.”

His smile was warm and brilliant as he stretched his hand out to me. I almost lost myself in his sunny smile, because he reminded me of Yan Bei, that senior I once loved!

I only came back to my senses after Huo Xiaojin touched me unintentionally. I shook his hand a little awkwardly. An Ming seemed very casual, and after some greetings, told us to make ourselves at home, then went to welcome the others.

“He looks very young!” I said, puzzled. Aunt looked like she was in her thirties,

yet An Ming only looked to be about twenty-five or twenty-six.

Huo Xiaojin pulled me to the food tables, and started to pick up desserts, “He only looks young, but this wedding, I hope it goes smoothly!” He handed the plate in his hands to me.

I was very surprised, not used to him being like this towards me. After all, the previous times when he appeared before me, he was mostly so drunk he couldn’t be called a human.

“What do you mean?” I suddenly remembered the conversation between Stepmom and An Qiang. I was already curious back then, and now that I heard Huo Xiaojin say it, I was even more interested. What happened to An Ming?

“An Ming’s marriages, this should be the sixth time!” He stuffed a small piece of cake into my mouth.

I looked at him, baffled. Wasn’t this action a little too intimate? Frowning and finally swallowing the food in my mouth, I was about to talk when he said, “We both didn’t eat anything for lunch, so you should be hungry!” Finishing, he stuffed another piece into my mouth.

I really wasn’t used to this! He was clearly a playboy, but why were his words, his actions, so caring and warm? I didn’t let him stuff any more things into my mouth, instead beginning to eat myself. Of course, my curious heart didn’t stop either.

“Did he marry and then divorce?” In my knowledge, rich people liked to do this. After all, my female seniors always said, a man’s love towards a woman cannot last more than two years!

“Divorce?” Huo Xiaojin suddenly put his mouth to my ear. My face turned red and I tried to dart away, but he held me tightly: “Five women who almost married him died on the day of the wedding!” His voice was very low, and I was almost scared to death by his words!

“Everyone! I appreciate that you all took out this time to celebrate my son’s wedding!”

An old voice sounded. I was still dumb, letting Huo Xiaojin pull me to a back seat. I looked over, and saw an elderly man standing on the platform joyfully.

Just by looking at the features I could tell that he was An Ming's father, because they looked so similar.

“Let's not say too much, but watch my son and daughter-in-law walk the path of marriage happily!” After saying this, the elderly man mentioned towards the other end of the red carpet. I followed his gaze, and saw An Ming and a pretty girl in a white wedding dress already standing on the carpet. Two children walked in front of them, sprinkling the flower petals in their baskets.

Applauses sounded, and along with the music, the newlyweds began walking forward slowly. But my face was red from holding my breath! Because, behind the bride, was a black shadow, so glaring on the white dress! I looked at Huo Xiaojin hurriedly, but his expression told me, he didn't see it.....

Chapter 30: The Creepy Wedding (II)

[Next Chapter]

Maybe because of my labored breathing, Huo Xiaojin bumped me with his elbow and asked, "What's the matter?"

But I didn't move my gaze, watching the bride move past me. On the long tail of her snowy white wedding dress, sat a black, human figure, but I couldn't see its face. Suddenly, a blood-red eye showed through the charred, messy hair. Only one eye. And that eye started looking at me when the bride walked past me.

I sucked in a breath, feeling all my blood shooting up towards my eye. My eye felt like it would exploded. I want to close my eyes, but to no avail. I can even clearly feel my eyeball bulging out, and piercing pain came from my eye socket.

I could feel Huo Xiaojin shaking my body anxiously, I could hear the muffled conversation of some people nearby, but I couldn't control my own body. When I felt blood was going to spray out my eye, a figure suddenly blocked my view.

An instant, it happened in an instant. Finally not staring at the black figure, my body could suddenly move. My eyes shut, I started panting heavily. Huo Xiaojin pulled me into his arms hastily, as if about to carry me away, but I hurriedly waved my hand, "I'm fine, I, I'm fine now!"

I leaned against Huo Xiaojin tiredly. Although I didn't want this to happen, but my body was always more honest than my heart. I felt drained, so I could only lean on him temporarily.

"Are you a pig? Even though you knew it's dangerous to do that, you still had to look for yourself!"

This voice couldn't be more familiar, it was Huo Xiaoran! He hadn't appeared since yesterday; why would he be here so in time? Looking at him, I knew, if not for him, I would definitely be dead this time!

Pushing away Huo Xiaojin, I stood up slowly, "I'm going to the restroom." Just as I turned around to leave, he grabbed my hand.

"Are you okay? I'll go with you!" Seeing the worry in his eyes, I was a little

surprised, but still shook my head, “No need, I’ll be back very quickly!”

I didn’t dare look back at the bride, because I knew that black figure was still there. When I finally walked to a corner, I asked, “What’s going on? What was that?” I didn’t understand. I had thought that it was because the creepy old lady did something to me so I could see the ghost Huo Xiaoran, but why could I see that thing now.

Even though I didn’t want to admit that it was a ghost, but besides a ghost, what else could it be?

“Why would I know what’s going on? That thing is obviously the same as me!” Huo Xiaoran’s answer was very casual.

“Stop playing dumb in front of me. I should only be able to see you, why can I see others too?” Ghost, this word, I still couldn’t say out loud. Even though I knew clearly in my heart, that that was a ghost, and a ghost with a very deep resentment. Because in that gaze, I felt its hatred clearly!

Huo Xiaoran curved the edge of his lip, “As for why you can see it, I really don’t know. But I think it must have something to do with ghost marriage and yin gu!”

Finishing, he looked towards the stage. The newlyweds have already finished walking the red carpet. Although I was still a little scared, when I looked over, there was no trace of the black shadow anymore. If not for what just happened to me, looking at it right now, I would have thought I hallucinated.

The bride was very beautiful, her smile was very happy, and beside her, An Ming was also gazing at her with love. When the best man brought the ring up, the groom accepted it, slowly sliding it onto the bride’s finger, then started to say the vows.

Suddenly, just beside the bride, I saw that black figure again. But it was just for a fleeting second before it vanished once more. My heart skipped a beat, an ominous feeling rising.

“What is it trying to do?” I stared, because a black object shaped like a hand was caressing the ring the groom put on for the bride. It’s action was very gentle, like nostalgia! So was it because of that ring?

“How would I know!” Huo Xiaoran shot back, then turned to watch the stage

intently.

But I was surprised: “You don’t know? Aren’t you a ghost? Is there anything a ghost doesn’t know?” In my knowledge, ghosts were invincible. Even taking someone’s life should be easy as moving your fingers!

“Who said ghosts were invincible? Every world has its own rules!”

Although I didn’t really understand what he was saying, I could guess part of it. He probably meant that even for ghosts, there were things that could and couldn’t be done, or shouldn’t be done.

I watched as An Ming held the bride’s hand, raising the cold fire torch high. Although I was worried, I was still attracted by the high tower of wine glasses. It was really pretty. I have seen ones like it before, but back then, the glass tower wasn’t so big, so high, and so pretty as this one.

Applauding sounded in the room, and An Ming held the hand of the bride as they slowly put the cold flame torch onto the wine glass tower.....

“No!” I screamed, because I saw the black shadow suddenly appear beside the bride and the glass tower. Just when the bride was lighting up the wine glasses, the black figure seemed to move, and then the high tower fell down directly towards the bride, the burning flames tinted with blue all crashing towards the bride.

An Ming yelled and jumped out of the way, but because of the long wedding dress, the bride wasn’t able to get away in time, and fell down on the stage. The liquid in the glasses soaked the bride, and the blue flames rushed up swiftly. Very soon, the stage was on fire!

Everyone escaped out of the room, and a few people looking like servants rushed over with fire extinguishers. An Ming just stood there in a daze, his eyes wide open.

I tried to rush over, but was pulled by Huo Xiaojin. Beside my ears were the painful screams of the bride. I struggled desperately, wanting to go over and help, but unable to, because I was not just a bit shorter than Huo Xiaojin.

“Don’t meddle!”

He said into my ear quietly. I stopped struggling and looked towards him in confusion. I couldn't understand, there wasn't any astonishment on his face, as if this was bound to happen. I looked at the woman rolling around the stage, my heart hurting. Although I didn't know her, it was a human life!

Very soon, the fire was extinguished, but the woman on the ground scorched black. No one could tell it was a wedding dress anymore; looking over now, the most you could know was that it was a person. The ambulance drove right in and stopped beside me. Watching the nurses carry the bride hastily into the ambulance, I let out a small breath. At least she was still alive!

I was pulled away by Huo Xiaojin. In the car, I couldn't keep silent anymore: "Tell me, what is going on?"

Huo Xiaojin sighed lowly, took out a cigarette and lit it, leaning his head against the headrest.

"An Ming's first wedding was during the first year An Qiang married into the Huo family. It was a summer. His wedding was near the ocean, because the bride really liked the sea. But like today, after An Ming made the vows, the bride actually jumped into the sea from the rocks in front of everyone. We wanted to rush over and rescue her, but after a few waves, where was she to be seen?"

I watched him fearfully. He took a deep breath, then slowly spit out green smoke.

"From that time on, this is the sixth time. An Ming's bride will have an accident after he makes the vows! And it's impossible to prevent!"

"Ring! Did he use the same ring every wedding?" I asked.

Huo Xiaojin looked at me in puzzlement, then shook his head, "Of course not, the first ring fell into the sea along with the bride!"

He threw the cigarette out the window and started the car.

"It's so late now, are we still going home?" I asked. The sky was already dark by now! The shadow I just saw still made me nervous, so I was even more afraid of the darkness of the night.

"No, but we can't stay here for the night either. Let's go find a hotel! Now that

such a thing happen to the An family, most likely we won't be able to go home for a while. Yun Li cares very much about the stock in the hands of the An family, so she probably hopes we can do something, to put her in favor of the old man of the An family."

I shook my head. To everything Huo Xiaojin said, I agreed deeply. Yun Li was a person like that. To gain control of the Huo Corporation, she would do anything she can, not to mention that she didn't have a good relationship with the An family. Last time An Qiang shamed her publically during the board meeting, and yet the stocks the An family held were important, so of course she would want the favor of the An family.

The most happy thing about marrying into a rich family was to be able to spend money without worrying it might run out, just like the room in front of me. It was already very lavish, but I heard Huo Xiaojin complaining it was too ordinary just now. To me, this was already extremely luxurious.

Without thinking much, I threw myself onto the bed. I needed a good rest after the turmoil of the day. But before I could close my eyes, my cellphone rang. The cellphone was brought to me by Matron Wang from Yun Li before I left, telling me to bring it along, so that if something happened, I could contact her in time.

But I knew, that she was afraid I might disappear from the Huo family. Leaving something with me, one, to remind me, and two, of course to easier control me!

I pressed the answer button: "Yes?"

"I heard that an accident happened to the An family?"

Sure enough, it was Yun Li. But she got the information fast enough. Even if it was printed on newspaper, it shouldn't be out yet, but she knew so quickly. So she does care about the An family very much.

"Yes!"

"Tomorrow, visit An Ming's newly wed wife for me. I heard she's not dead yet, still in the hospital. I will tell Huo Xiaojin to go with you."

Yun Li didn't bother being nice at all. I only answered yes after she finished instructing everything. Just as I was going to hang up, her voice sounded in the phone again: "Remember, this is your chance. If you can let that old man in the

An Family trust me more, I will agree to let you leave the Huo family!”

Hanging up, I smiled coldly. Leave? Just don’t know if I was going to walk out of the Huo house, or I would be carried out the Huo House!

[Next Chapter]

Chapter 31: Fright in the Hospital

Actually, ever since that day when I found that Yun Li did something to me, I started to plan. Even though I was naive, now I also started to devise ways to escape the Huo house, escape Yun Li. To me, she was a siren, seemingly harmless but actually deadly.

Even after I knew she didn't want me alive, she actually still used my leaving as an excuse to control me! But this time visiting the An family was my chance.

"You're so stupid, so why are you trying to get water out of a dry well!"

I didn't need to open my eyes to know it was Huo Xiaoran. Every time he appears, the temperature in my room would lower a few degrees. And now staying with him alone, don't know when it started, but I felt much more natural, no longer anxious or fearful.

"Well, if you know I'm stupid, then why are you still trying to use me?"

"Don't put it so harshly. Even if I really am using you, at least I'll let you leave alive!"

I glanced at him, not wanting to discuss this stagnant topic with him anymore. Everyone said they'll let me leave alive, but my body was still tampered on by others, I still lost my most precious thing, I was still imprisoned in this invisible cage!

"Woman! My patience is limited. Don't take a yard when I give you an inch!"

"Ha! So funny. Then kill me! Perfect, does my life have anymore meaning? I am a live human being, I have my life, but what about you? The living buys me with money and uses me as a pawn! And wants to take my life."

"Even dead people like you won't leave me alone. You're already dead; why can't you just put everything down and leave? And you're trying so hard to use me. Although I don't know how much hate is between you two, I am a living person! A living person! Is it okay for you to take other's people's lives as a joke?" I spilled out everything in my mind.

Only when I stopped did I realize his expression was icy enough to numb people. But I already said it, and I'm not afraid. The worse that could happen was death!

"Not knowing what's good for you!"

He suddenly vanished after throwing down this sentence. I sighed in a low voice, starting to be relieved I went through this unscathed, because his expression just now looked like he might actually really kill me. In my mind, the scene of the wedding appeared. To a ghost, killing a person was probably as easy as breathing!

"Remember, An Ming's situation, don't meddle! This is for your own good!"

The unexpected voice scared me so much that I screamed. After looking all around and making sure he didn't reappear, I relaxed. But I still didn't understand his words. Was he worrying for me?

Early the next morning, I was woken by Huo Xiaojin knocking on the door. Recalling Yun Li's phone call yesterday, I could guess what Huo Xiaojin wanted to do.

"Okay, I know! I know!" After cleaning myself up, I walked out the door. Huo Xiaojin was leaning against the door frame, making passersby take second and third glances.

Can't help it, who told him have an enchanting face like Huo Xiaoran!

"Let's go!"

"You know where we're going?" He followed behind me and asked.

"Where else, Stepmom also called you yesterday right? Today, we must go to the hospital to visit An Ming's wife, correct?" Actually, I was very curious. If Yun Li could order me around, that was because there were things that limited me. But what about Huo Xiaojin? I didn't understand. Why did Huo Xiaojin seem to listen to her every order; even if he was upset, he never got mad at her.

"I say, does Stepmom know some secret of yours that you don't want told?" I asked.

He looked at me, puzzled. I laughed and said, "Or else, based on your attitude,

you don't look like a person who would obey her orders!" I expected him to get angry, or shout at me, but instead he fell quiet. Even when we walked into the hospital, he still didn't say anything.

Looking at his expression, I guessed that my words made him awkward! In the hospital, Huo Xiaojin and I went directly to the top floor. The hospital wasn't public, so there weren't many people.

"An Ming!" Huo Xiaojin patted the man standing at the door of the ward.

Seeing An Ming's haggard complexion, I felt sad for him. His wife was now lying in the ICU, completely wrapped in white gauze. I couldn't even see her eyes. The monitors beside the bed beeped continuously. I couldn't believe, that the person so beautiful yesterday, was now in such a state.

"Thank you for coming to visit her." An Ming didn't say much, only thanking Huo Xiaojin.

"What does the doctor say?" I asked in a small voice, my eyes searching the ward. I was a little worried. Huo Xiaojin just told me yesterday that every girl who married An Ming will die, but now she's still alive, that thing, will probably appear again!

"Severe burns, still unconscious, I....." Before finishing, An Ming started sobbing.

Huo Xiaojin patted his shoulder, and supported him to a chair nearby to sit down, comforting him. Looking at him, I also felt sad. They got to the marriage part; that means they must love each other very much! Now that such a thing happened, it's no wonder why he is so sorrowful.

Not long after, the old man I saw on the wedding came. But he didn't come to this ward, instead going directly to the doctor's office. Huo Xiaojin looked at me, then followed the old man away.

"I heard, that this happens every time you marry?" I asked in a low voice. Even though I knew this was not the time to say this, I still hoped I could help that poor woman in the ward.

An Ming looked blankly at me, tears in his eyes. I was just about to explain when he spoke: "Maybe, maybe this is my fate, that I shouldn't fall in love with

anyone!”

“Please don’t think me meddlesome, I just want to help her!” I pointed at the ward, then continued, “Before you got married the first time, have you hurt, hurt anyone?”

As soon as I finished, An Ming, whose head was hung low, suddenly lifted his head, his eyes full of fear. After a short pause, he stood up abruptly and left! I watched his leaving figure in confusion. So, was that ghost because of him? Can it be that he had some girlfriend who committed suicide? Or why else would it always kill the women who were going to marry him!

After his figure disappeared, I turned to look inside the ward. Under the white gauze, I could barely see some blood and charred black. This reminded me of that black figure I saw on the wedding. It was also like this, black as char!

Just as my thoughts were wandering away, I saw her barely moving chest suddenly start moving in bigger motions, and heard the beeping from the electrocardiogram heart monitor representing her heartbeats getting faster. I looked towards the nurse station anxiously, but there was no one there. I rushed towards the doctor’s office.

Pushing open the door, it was empty inside. Sweat started beading on my forehead, and I rushed back to the ward. When I glanced in from the window, the bed was empty! There was no one on it! My face pressed on the glass, I started searching the ward frantically, but there was nothing.

Bang! A hand wrapped in gauze suddenly slapped on the window in front of me. I was really scared, jumping back a few steps. I watched the hand as it clawed on the glass window, making creaking noises. I was trembling, the sweat on my forehead already dripping down.

A head, a head covered in gauze slowly rose up from the bottom of the window. Blood-red eyes! There was a pair of blood-red eyes before me, staring straight at me. An icy feeling started crawling up from my feet.....

“If you continue to meddle! The person dying will be you!” She didn’t say it; it was her slowly moving lips which told me.

“Don’t take a yard when given an inch!”

It was him! It was Huo Xiaoran. I scuttered behind him, wanting to escape that pair of blood-red eyes. Touching him, my tense heart immediately became calm. He was here, what a relief that he was here.

The person in the window only stared at us for a long time, then slowly disappeared down the window edge.

Huo Xiaoran turned around, threw away my hand and yelled, "I told you not to meddle! Can you not understand?!"

"I....."

"Don't you understand that each pays his own debt? What did you think you could do? Look at yourself! You know nothing! What do you think you can do just with that little pity of yours?"

Looking at his cold and pale face, except for using tears to relieve my fear, I didn't know what else to do or to say.

Only until I was crying so much I was out of breath, did he touch my face, his tone much gentler, "There are things humans can't do, and there are also things ghosts can't do. She did these, so she will be punished. And you must know, some things, even if you interfere, the results might not change."

I nodded, crying. Although I didn't understand what he meant, I was still alive, I didn't want to die!

"Mo Xiaoya! Mo Xiaoya!" Suddenly, my vision went dark, and I felt someone patting my face. I felt like as if I had been faint for a long time, my body almost numb with stiffness.

Slowly, images began to appear before my eyes. When I finally got used to the light, I saw Huo Xiaojin looking at me worriedly.

Moving my head, I tried to look at my surroundings. When I realized I was lying in a ward, I asked in confusion, "Where, where am I?" I searched around in the room, where was Huo Xiaoran? He was right beside me a minute ago!

"Where? In the hospital! How could you suddenly faint when you were perfectly fine? How do you feel now, is anything making you uncomfortable?" He patted my hands and feet gently. I shook my head, telling him there's nothing

wrong with me.

The door to the ward was pushed open, and a doctor walked in with his stuff. He came to my bed and said to Huo Xiaojin solemnly: “What kind of husband are you? How could you still let your wife be so busy and tired when she’s pregnant! Really!”

Chapter 32: Still in Fright

My gaze blank, the doctor's words floating beside my ear. I was already pregnant for two weeks!

"Mo Xiaoya!" Huo Xiaojin picked up a chair furiously and slammed it onto the ground, and the chair instantly splintered. I only glanced at him before continuing to stare at the white wall in front of me, my mind blank!

Impossible! Impossible! He was a ghost! How could I be pregnant with his child! My thoughts buzzed. I felt the doctor must have gotten something wrong. But besides demanding a second exam desperately, there was nothing else I could say.

"Two weeks! That means, you got pregnant after you married into the Huo family! Although my brother already left, I still refuse to let you stomp on his dignity like this!"

Looking at Huo Xiaojin, who looked like he wanted to kill me, I didn't know what say. I just shook my head and mumbled, "I really don't know, why this happened!"

"You don't know?" He suddenly started laughing, but except for mocking, I couldn't hear anything else from it.

"What do you think our Huo family is? Idiots? For you to cheat on like this!"

"I don't want to argue with you!" Putting on my shoes, I wanted to take a walk alone. Right now, I really needed to calm down and think about it.

Huo Xiaojin's furious roars sounded behind me, but I didn't stop, walking directly out the door. On the way to the restroom, I passed by where An Ming's wife was. I couldn't help taking a second glance. Now, not only was An Ming standing at the door, but also the old man from the An family whom Yun Li told me to favor.

"An Ming, what did you do? Why would all these happen?" Old man An asked in a low voice.

An Ming didn't reply, hitting his head with his hands and shaking his head. I could see tears dropping to the ground by his feet, dropping onto his shoes.

Old man An suddenly slapped An Ming's back and stood up, pointing at the window of the ward, "She has your child in her belly, my grandchild! No matter what you did, I want her to give birth to the child successfully!"

"Dad! Did you think I did all of this? Even the fiercest tiger won't eat its own cubs! How could I do this?"

My gaze swept over the woman inside. She was also pregnant! I thought back to the happenings that felt like a dream. Even though others might think it was just a dream, I myself knew, that was real. Just, the child in her belly.....

Sighing, I shook my head, and walked to the end of the hallway without stopping. I gazed into the distance, my hand subconsciously moving to my abdomen. There was already a life starting there.

I don't know how long I stood there. Only when night came, did I notice I couldn't see anything anymore. And I also made a decision!

I will keep this child, for no other reason, just because it was my child, and had nothing to do with others! No matter who the father was, as long as the child is in my belly, that meant the child was normal!

I won't even tell Huo Xiaoran. For the child in my belly, I must leave the Huo house even faster. This child was not wished for. If someone knew about his existence, both the child and I would be in danger.

A wind blew past, bringing coldness with it. I pulled my clothes tighter, ready to go back to my ward, because there was another person I needed to explain to. If I wanted to keep this child, I must make Huo Xiaojin keep silent.

Passing by the ward of An Ming's wife, there was already nobody in front of the door. But when I glanced inside the ward, my feet stopped abruptly. Because the person that was supposed to lie on the bed was sitting up slowly! Her movements looked very unnatural, I don't know how to describe it.

When I saw her pull off the wires from the monitor from her body, I covered my mouth and sucked in a deep breath. Did I faint again? I pinched myself on my arm, hard. The pain told me this was real!

When the woman wrapped in blood-soaked gauze stood up slowly and walked towards the window, I suddenly had a feeling that she would jump down from there. Without thinking, I pushed open the door and rushed inside. When I stopped, the woman nearing the window also stopped, turning her head around to look at me.

Bang! Along with her movements, the door behind me suddenly closed, the curtains over the glass window also pulled down tight.

She just stood there quietly. When she saw I didn't make another move, she turned her head back around, and started walking awkwardly to the open window.....

"You!" I shouted, "I don't care who you are! But this woman is innocent!" Even I didn't know where I got the courage. But after my yelling, she suddenly stopped moving.

"Do you know, there's a child in her belly! A child! No matter what adults did wrong, the child is innocent." I have never even talked to that woman, but when I heard she was also pregnant today, I suddenly felt close to her.

No matter what, I want to try and save the child in her belly!

Seeing that she stopped, I felt that she was hesitating, and couldn't help be a little joyous. Maybe because of this hesitation, I believed in more that this ghost might be An Ming's ex-girlfriend.

But this pause only lasted for less than three minutes before she started walking towards the window again. No matter what I shouted, she didn't stop. When she climbed on top of the railing of the balcony, I rushed over, and grabbed her hand tightly.

"An Ming! An Ming made you die, right?" I tried shouting.

But she only looked at me and smiled creepily. The white gauze on her head started getting soaked in blood because of her smile. But I didn't dare think of anything else, didn't dare to let go of her hand, because I knew, once I let go, the last hope for her child would be gone.

"If it's because of An Ming, then why don't you go find him? You know this woman is innocent too!"

“Let, go!”

She shocked me by suddenly talking. But her voice made people frightened from the inside of their bones. It was shrill and sharp, and very ethereal.

“No! I won’t let go! Your death is not her fault. If it’s because of hate, then can you please stop hurting innocent people. Go find the person who harmed you directly, make him kneel down in front of you, apologize for his mistakes, or just kill him, anything, but you can’t hurt innocent people! Not to mention that there’s a child in her belly!”

Because of our close distance, by the moonlight, I saw, that in that pair of eyes almost completely covered in gauze, were a few drops of shining tears.....

“Don’t think that because he’s here to protect you, you can do anything you want. If we really start fighting, he wouldn’t get any benefits! Those unhappy spirits who haven’t touched blood; he doesn’t even count as a ghost!”

I was surprised. I didn’t expect for her to turn the conversation to Huo Xiaoran. Because I my momentary stun I let go a bit. But I saw her mouth curve even more upward, the gauze on her face already soaked in blood, but the tears in her eyes even more obvious!

“No!” I screamed, leaning down. At the last second, I grabbed her hand tightly, watching her body sway in the air.

“Grab tight, don’t let go!” I said with difficulty. I knew this woman could hear it, or why else would there be tears in her eyes!

I originally thought that the female ghost wouldn’t do anything else, but in front of my eyes, a black shadow disentangled itself from her body. My heart started thumping around wildly in my chest. On her back, a black shadow started uncurling itself, and I saw a scorched black face with only one blood-red eye.

“The fault is not on her! Just why can’t you let go? Go find whoever harmed you! Innocent people can’t disperse the hatred in your heart!” This time, I wasn’t afraid. Because in my slightly numb hand, I was holding onto two human lives!

The hand the black figure was reaching towards me suddenly stopped in mid-air, then slowly retracted. I watched nervously, using my whole strength to not let go. Outside the door, noises sounded, then someone banged the door open. I

glanced back, then pulled on her hand even more tightly.

“Next time! If you dare stop me again, you! I won’t let you go either!”

When I turned back around because of her voice, the black figure had already disappeared from her back! And she started crying and screaming.

“What are you doing?” Huo Xiaojin was the first person to rush to my side, and seeing the person I was pulling on, reached out and helped me get her up.

Watching Huo Xiaojin pull her up, I let out a long breath. When Huo Xiaojin finally got the woman back up, An Ming rushed inside, hugging the woman and started to cry.

“Why are you so stupid? We still have a child! A child! How could you be so selfish and want to take away our child!”

I know, in their eyes, they would think she wanted to commit suicide because of the severe burns on her body. But I knew how brave she was! Even if the female ghost controlled her body, she still wanted to live.

“Mu Ni, the An family will treat your wounds even if we have to go bankrupt. Don’t fret, rest well. Anyway, no matter how you look, I, An Tingren, will only accept you as the wife of our An family!”

Only now, did I know the old man of the An family was called An Tingren!

“Are you okay?” Huo Xiaojin patted my shoulder and asked.

I shook my head calmly. I didn’t expect for him to come look for me; I thought that after he was sure I cheated on Huo Xiaoran, he would leave angrily, and then go home and tell Yun Li everything that happened here.

Looking the nervous faces of people of the An family, I felt a little sour. I knew that Mu Ni was still able to get such attention and care — not to mention if An Ming really loved her — was mostly because she was pregnant with the child of An Ming.

Chapter 33: My Choice

Returning to my ward, I began to think about how to talk about the child with Huo Xiaojin. I was thinking whether to directly tell him this child was Huo Xiaoran's. Every time I thought about this, I wanted to laugh. I really was curious; what would Huo Xiaojin's reaction be when he heard this!

Sitting down on my bed, Huo Xiaojin handed me a cup of hot water: "Tell me, who's the father?"

"Why must you know?" I looked at him in surprise.

"Have you thought about it? If Yun Li knows, what horrifying things would she do? This child, no matter who his father is, you better..... abort him!" When he got to the end of the sentence, his head was lowered.

I stared at him. I have thought about many possibilities, but just not this one! He actually tried to persuade me to abort the child!

"I will not abort the child!" Yes, I will not. No matter who's the father, as long as he was in my belly, he was my child. Like me, who had been sickly since childhood, my mother still didn't abandon me.

"You!" Very rarely, there was panic in Huo Xiaojin's eyes.

But I put down the cup in my hands and grabbed his hand. This was my first time voluntarily getting close to him. Actually, as long as he wasn't drunk, he wasn't that annoying.

"Huo Xiaojin! I hope you can keep my secret. I will try my best to leave the Huo house as soon as possible. Then, both my child and I will live happily. Please? It doesn't matter if you pity me, or sympathize with me; as long as you don't tell anyone about the child!" I couldn't help my eyes filling with tears. His eyes were complicated, and the expression on his face changed again and again. After a long time, he said, "Xiaoya, your belly would be obvious after at most three months. Except for me and Uncle, it's all women in the house. Did you think they wouldn't notice?"

Getting to this part, he paused, and supported me, helping me lean against the

pillows and continued, "Have you thought about it, you can have a child later, but if Yun Li knows you're pregnant right now, this would be a great humiliation in her life. She wouldn't let you go. Then, not only will you lose your child, your life will also be in danger!"

I kept my head lowered, unanswering. Maybe from the beginning, Yun Li never planned to let me leave the Huo family alive. Thinking of this, I suddenly realized, did Huo Xiaojin not know Yun Li's plan? Or, did he know, but pretended he didn't know? I glanced at his face out of the corner of my eye.

His face was covered in conflict and worry. Was I being oversensitive? In the Huo house, I don't know who's the enemy, who's a friend. Originally, I was alone by myself, so I didn't need to worry that much. Now my child is in my belly, so as a mother, I must love and care for him!

"Xiaojin! My whole life, only one person loved me, and that was my mother. Even when I got so sick I almost died, even when my father didn't want to save me when I was sick because I was girl, my mother still used her life to protect me! This was what she taught me using her whole life!"

I lifted my head, and saw the astonishment on Huo Xiaojin's face. I knew that in his world, there weren't any people like me. It's no wonder he would be shocked.

"I don't need you to do anything; I just want you to pretend you didn't know. The rest, I can take care of myself!" I watched him stubbornly. When his expression became peaceful again, I smiled. I knew, he already agreed to my request.

I let out a long breath. Just then, the door to my ward was pushed open. The person walking in was that old man An Tingren, and following behind him was Aunt An Qiang!

An Qiang had some fruits in her hand. She set them down on the table and didn't speak. Old man An started: "Thank you! Saving my grandson; we the An family will remember this favor!"

I smiled faintly, but he passed me an envelop. It was thick, and the bulging looked like money! I looked at him in confusion, "Mr. An, this is?"

“I, An Tingren, dislike being in debt to others the most!”

I understood what he meant, but this was not what I wanted!

“Mr. An, before you decide on the truth of the matter, I would suggest you to keep calm!” I answered coldly. When I stopped, Huo Xiaojin and An Qiang looked at me with surprise. Only An Tingren’s expression was calm and didn’t flicker.

I shook my head, indicating that I won’t accept it. Seeing him take it back, I said, “When Ms. Mu wakes, you can go ask her. I don’t think you’ll believe my explanation!”

“Chairman An..... ” With realization on his face, Huo Xiaojin tried to say something, but was stopped by An Tingren waving his hand.

“Little girl, I heard you just married Huo Xiaoran. But Yun Li’s words, I only trust thirty percent! And today’s matter, if you choose to decline, I will believe you want something else. I only trust what I see myself. If what Mu Ni says is different from what you’re saying, I’ll tell you our An family won’t let go easily!”

I nodded, then replied calmly, “This matter, I suggest you ask your son An Ming. If you want to truly save your grandson, I think he is the key!”

Right after I finished, I noticed An Qiang’s expression change, and she lowered her head as if hiding. I didn’t understand, but didn’t want to think much about it, so I looked back towards An Tingren. But when I saw the flash of panic in An Tingren’s eyes, I suddenly felt that maybe there is a dark secret in their An family?

An Tingren didn’t speak again, and I didn’t want to prolong this either: “If I saved your grandson, this favor, you’ll really be in debt to me!”

Since he spoke his intentions truthfully, I must also state my position clearly! Because maybe the An family was the key I needed to leave the Huo house cage!

Old man An nodded, then stood up and left. An Qiang finally lifted up her head to look at me.

“Xiaoya, thank you!” An Qiang grabbed my hand tightly. Although she was smiling, in her eyes, I couldn’t see any trace of happiness or gratitude. Her eyes were very calm, calm as if nothing had happened.

I shook my head, pulling my hand out of her hands.

She took back her hands awkwardly, then asked, "What happened? Why would you be in the hospital? Did you get hurt while saving Mu Ni?"

I glanced at Huo Xiaojin, ready to speak before he could, but he was still faster than me.

"It's nothing! She just got scared on An Ming's wedding, so we came to the hospital for a quick checkup!"

When he finished, I smiled gratefully at him, but he pretend not to see it, and continued, "I'll go to doctor's office, your test results should be out!"

Hearing this, I immediately understood. Since he helped me cover up, of course he wouldn't say anything about the child. But no one had talked to the doctor yet, and An Qiang might go and find something out. Huo Xiaojin going over now, was to keep the doctor silent. A warm feeling filled my heart. Looking at his figure, I smiled.

"Xiaoya! About what I said..... " An Qiang asked hurriedly.

I shook my head and said, "Aunt, I don't know what happened between you and Stepmom, but I just want to say, I'm only a decoration! Now, and forever! Even if you pulled me to your battle line, I could give almost no help!"

"How come?" An Qiang's expression became hasty. But I saw the flash of hatred in her eyes clearly.

"Xiaoya, I came today all because of you! I know if I say too much in the house, Yun Li will find trouble for you, and I don't want to hurt you. So that's why under the name of visiting Mu Ni, I chased you all the way here! I'm sincere! And if you want to leave the Huo house, unless you topple Yun Li, or, based on her personality, you'll never be able to leave!"

An Qiang said this indignantly, as if this was a conversation between two good friends. I was starting to waver.

Seeing me silent, she spoke faster: "Don't worry! When the time comes, even if I have to use the whole An family, I will still protect you!"

Looking at her, I was very confused. I frowned and asked, "Aunt wants to take

over the Huo Corporation? Then..... ”

“No! That’s not it! If you want the Huo Corporation, I can give it to you!” An Qiang interrupted me.

Her unintentional words made me start to doubt her goal! My head lowered, I started thinking. She didn’t want the Huo Corporation, yet she must fight life-to-death with Yun Li. So what did she want?

“Don’t think too much! I just want to live happily ever after.” Tears appeared in her eyes, and after wiping them she continued, “If Yun Li leaves the Huo family, Ningen will return, return to the Ningen who loves me.”

The word “love”, has the ability to make people go crazy. Right now, the yearning her eyes was real. I can feel that the love she had for uncle Huo Ningen was not fake. Thinking to here, I suddenly remembered the labored breathing and faint sighs from when I passed by Yun Li’s study a few days ago.

“Okay, I understand now!” I nodded. Of course, I won’t take the Huo Corporation, but since I must go against Yun Li, I needed a big tree that can protect me and for me to lean on. The relationship between Uncle and Yun Li was already very obvious, and Huo Xiaojin..... I shook my head internally. He didn’t seem dependable, so I could only trust An Qiang!

She smiled through her tears, and hugged me tightly: “Thank you! Thank you, Xiaoya! I will persuade Father, and I’ll get Father to teach you how to manage a company! Don’t worry! I believe that as long as Father agrees to appear, it would be what the shareholders want the most!”

“Mr. An?” I asked, confused.

An Qiang nodded, and let me go, “Father was one of the founding members of the Huo Corporation. He has always been a very important presence for the Huo Corporation to achieve its today. Only when Huo Xiaoran took over, Father retreated to behind the scenes.”

“Since it’s like this, then start with your plan! Half a month isn’t long!” I remember last time, Yun Li mentioned, that they will choose the new chairman on the next board meeting. And I must sit in that seat to get rid of Yun Li and achieve freedom!

Chapter 34: Huo Xiaoran's Hatred

At night, my ward was very quiet. After sending away Huo Xiaojin, there was no one left here! But I couldn't go to sleep, for nothing else, just because when I was saving Mu Ni, Huo Xiaoran did not appear! Such a thing never happened before! I remember that during the day, when that female ghost was threatening me, he appeared. Why was he gone during the night then?

I started to get fretful, his face keep appearing in my mind. I shook my head violently, trying to chase him out, but the results proved that I couldn't do it! I started worrying for him. Did something happen?

After some more struggling, I finally gave up! I sat up in bed, and started calling his name nervously and quietly: "Huo Xiaoran? Huo Xiaoran?" After calling for a long time, the room was still silent enough to hear a needle falling to the ground.

"Did something really happen?" Subconsciously, I gripped the sheet on the bed tighter. Only when I felt my palms slightly cold, did I notice that they were covered in sweat.

"I won't die!" Huo Xiaoran's voice suddenly sounded by my bed. I was about to throw the pillow in my hands over to vent my annoyance, but when I raised my pillow, I saw an almost transparent face!

Not just his face, even his body was half transparent. I stared, looking him up and down.

"What are you looking at? Don't tell me, you just noticed I'm handsome!" His voice was weak, even almost coughing.

I set the pillow down. I wanted to get up and look at him, but remembered the child in my belly. I don't know why, but I was afraid to get close to him, because I was afraid he will know I'm pregnant.

I pulled my quilt up some, asking, "What happened to you?"

After looking at me a long time, he answered softly, "A person needs to eat to stay alive, and a ghost needs hatred to stay alive!"

I really wanted to slap him. What did this strange, random sentence mean? I glared at him, looking at the indifference on his face, and without hesitation, the pillow in my hands flew over. Watching the pillow fly through his body, I sighed. Really! Why could he, who couldn't touch anything, actually touch me!

"Woman! Are you feeling very successful now that you saved a person?" He asked.

I was dumbfounded. I thought since he wasn't there, he wouldn't know what happened, but he did. I didn't know how to explain, because when he previously rescued me, he had warned me to not meddle.

"Woman! Next time, if you continue to ignore my words, I really won't save you!" He tone was very solemn.

I didn't know what to do, but I was annoyed.

"Didn't you also watch as I almost died?" As soon as the words left my mouth, I was scared by my own sentence. I was actually rebuking him!

As expected, when I looked towards him, his eyes were filled with astonishment! Suddenly, my face turned red. What is wrong with me; why would I say such a thing. I lowered my head, afraid to look at him, repeating to myself that it was because he rescued me before so I was worried if something happened to him.

When he started chuckling, I was extremely ashamed, wishing I could dig a hole and disappear.

"You can leave now!" I yelled, then dove under the covers.

"I can leave now? Then why did you call me?"

I threw away the quilt and stared at him: "I called you just to thank you, thank you for rescuing me before! Is that enough!"

"Only that?"

"Of course only that. What did you think?" I snorted and returned to under the quilt.

"Okay then! Since you have nothing else to say, I have other stuff to do, so goodbye."

“Wait!” Seeing him get up, I shouted. When he stopped, I sat up slowly, “Tell me about you and Yun Li!”

He looked at me, astonished, but didn’t answer. I explained: “Just like what you said, it seems like Yun Li really doesn’t want me to leave the Huo house alive, so..... I’ve decided to throw her off of me! I want to live, I want to live peacefully!”

Yes, not just I wanted to, I must live on for my baby! My hand subconsciously moved to my abdomen, trying to feel him. Maybe this was the supposed motherly love!

When I lifted my head to look at him, I realized he was looking out the window. I waited. Watching the aloof expression on his face, I don’t know why, but my heart ached for him a bit.

After waiting a long time, to the point where I thought he wouldn’t talk anymore, and I was about to give up, he started coldly, “If I said, my death was caused by her?”

I forgot to breath, just looking at him like that. I heard that it was an accident or something. Anyway, I have thought about many possibilities regarding his death, just not killed by someone else. In my twenty so years of life, I always believed that anyone who committed a crime wouldn’t be able to escape. But what about now? First, an unhappy spirit that’s tangled with An Ming, and now hearing such a thing from his mouth.

“How, how did you die?” I asked carefully. I only dared to ask him this because I was wasn’t afraid of him anymore. Before, even if you beat me to death, I still wouldn’t ask him this face to face.

After sighing lowly, he recounted the story: “After Yun Li married into the Huo family, many strange things happened. Until my father got admitted to the hospital because of her pregnant child, then died mysteriously! I started to suspect her, and after many troubles, I finally found a bit of evidence linking her to the death of my father.”

“Did she also kill your father?” I covered my mouth in shock. Yun Li was only three years older than me; how could she do so many frightening things?

“There’s not enough evidence, so I can’t be sure either!” He shook his head, seeming disappointed.

My brain was in a fog, so I asked in confusion, “But she harmed you because of those evidences! Right?”

“When I got the evidence, I set up my will, as the habit of the Huo family. So I don’t know if it’s because she wants the Huo Corporation, or if my father’s death is really because of her! So I can’t leave, I need to know the truth!”

Yes! If I were him, I also wouldn’t be peaceful. Wanting to know the truth, is not because still wanting to live, but because your closest family member just passed away like that; it was a knot in the heart!

“Huo Xiaoran!” I called his name out loud. Although it still sounded strange, I suddenly felt pity for him. He was at the peak of his life, yet he was harmed and killed, not to mention the mysterious death of his father.

He turned his head slightly towards me. The first time, I smiled at him.

“I agreed to team up with An Qiang! Even though I just want to throw off Yun Li, maybe I can help you! Is this okay?” I asked carefully, hoping he could understand the meaning in my words. Because after leaving the Huo family, I thought perhaps he could find peace and leave, and perhaps I could find the the creepy old lady to cut the red string that tied me and him together.

I wanted to put it nicely, but seeing the puzzlement on his face, I swallowed hard and explained, “You know, you’re already a dead person, and shouldn’t have too much connections with me, right? So…… ” I paused, looking at him cautiously. Don’t know why, but I was afraid that after I said these, he would get mad.

But I had to say these words, not just for me, but for my baby. Even though I know for sure this child must be his, even though I was baffled at how a dead person could impregnate me, right now, I could only do what benefited my child the most. As a mother, how would I explain to my child he had a ghost for his father?

“I hope that after I help you, there would be nothing more between us.”

Watching him, I studied his expression carefully. I thought he would be angry,

but he was unexpectedly calm. After a long time, he finally answered calmly, "Yes, as long as you help me find the cause of my father's death."

"No problem!" Before he could finish, I cut him off, afraid he would regret. Although after I spoke I saw his puzzled gaze, I could only give him a silly smile, "Don't think too much of it. I just want to repay you for saving my life twice. As the saying goes, the reason why humans are human is because they know to give thanks and pay it back."

Of course, this was a random excuse I just found, but wanting to repay him was the truth! But when I saw the confusion still in his eyes, I added hurriedly, "Also! I wish that you can protect my safety, because you know, I'm up against Yun Li, the Yun Li in your and An Qiang's mouths, a savage woman who would do anything to reach her goal. And you said before I couldn't trust An Qiang! You know, I don't want to die yet!"

After thinking for a while, the confusion on his face disappeared, and he nodded. My tense heart finally relaxed. Honestly, most of what I said was the truth, so it's not lying to him, I comforted myself.

"Don't worry! I will!"

So rare, he actually didn't make fun of me or anything, but agreed directly. I nodded, satisfied. No matter what, my chances of survival were much higher than Yun Li thought. I only needed to wait for Mu Ni to wake up and tell what happened today, and An Tingren will become a strong backup behind me.

Adding in An Qiang and Huo Xiaoran, I believed I could survive. But before I could rejoice, his voice sounded in my ear.

"Remember, on today of every month, try to stay away from danger."

I looked at him, puzzled, "Today? Why?" I suddenly remembered while saving Mu Ni, what that female ghost said, that Huo Xiaoran didn't even count as a ghost! At most an..... unhappy spirit! Were these two related?

Chapter 35: What Did Happen In the An Family

The morning sunlight is always the most beautiful, because it is pure without a fleck of dust! I didn't sleep for the whole night, because till the end, Huo Xiaoran still didn't tell me what happened to him yesterday. My hand touched my chest. This place, after seeing the almost transparent him last night, actually hurt!

Counting carefully, if I counted nights of the full moon of the Yin gu, he had already saved me four times! And when I saw his weak figure yesterday, I was suddenly afraid that he might die like this! No, he is already dead. I was afraid that he might disappear.

"Why are you absent-minded in the morning? Get up and eat something!" Huo Xiaojin walked in and set the things in his hand on the table.

I looked at him, but began to think about how Huo Xiaoran would look like when he was alive! He should also be slender and tall like Huo Xiaojin.....

"Get up. Don't think I'm going to feed you!" Huo Xiaojin got impatient. I came back to realization and slapped my forehead. I really feel I'm going crazy these days! Why think about those! After scolding myself internally, I saw the bowl of hot porridge beside my bed, but it didn't look like it was bought!

Although the porridge was thick, I saw things like rice kernels inside!

"Huo Xiaojin, don't tell me you made this yourself!" I pointed at the thing in front of me, then picked up a large lobster from it. The dead eyes of the lobster stared at me, but I threw it back into the bowl and laughed till I was breathless. I knew he wanted to make a seafood congee, but who will put these big, hardshell lobsters in a porridge?

Huo Xiaojin's face went white then red, and he snatched away the bowl from in front me, yelling: "What are you laughing at? This is the first time I wanted to make something for you to eat!"

I patted my chest, trying to regulate my breathing, "Sir, this is not the first time you wanted to make something for me to eat; it's the first time you actually cooked something! For seafood congee, just use those smaller, cheaper farmed

shrimps. If you really want to use lobsters, at least take off their shells!"

"If you don't want to eat it, fine!" He pursed his lips and covered the bowl, about to put it back in the bag.

Looking at how cute he was, my face started burning a little. I didn't say anything more, but took the bowl back from him, then started eating solemnly, even though..... it smelled of raw fish, and it didn't have salt! But I still swallowed everything down.

"Does it taste okay?"

Looking at his nervous expression, I nodded my head with some effort. Truly, this feeling was very warm.

"Huo Xiaojin?" I could call his name naturally now. He rested his chin on his hand and stared at me through his dark eyes, and I smiled, "Your brother; what was he like?"

This was the thing I thought about all last night after Huo Xiaoran left. After being with him for so long, although he was cold and aloof, he did save me, a useless stranger, multiple times. I just realized I knew nothing about him, except what I heard about in school: he was responsible and decisive, a business genius, the golden bachelor all girls dreamed for.

Huo Xiaojin's expression changed abruptly, his eyes filling with sorrow. After some time, he spoke quietly: "My brother, is the best elder brother in the world! Although he's stubborn and seemingly aloof, he has the warmest heart!"

Stubborn? Aloof? I twitched my lips. These two points couldn't be more correct! But that warm heart.....

"Why do suddenly ask this?" Huo Xiaojin's voice interrupted my thoughts, and I shook my head: "As his legal wife, wouldn't it be normal to be curious about him?"

Huo Xiaojin wanted to ask something else, but someone knocked on the door. I answered, and the door was pushed open. It was An Qiang. She didn't look happy.

"Huo Xiaojin, help me ask the doctor when I can leave the hospital!"

He looked at An Qiang then at me. Although he was puzzled, he still nodded and walked out.

“What happened? You look upset!” I asked.

An Qiang walked to my bedside and sat down, shaking her head, “I talked to Father yesterday, but he didn’t say anything. I tried again today, and he still didn’t give any answer!” An Qiang looked discouraged, but I chuckled.

“He’s waiting!” I replied simply. Seeing the confusion on her face, I explained, “Yesterday, I saved Mu Ni, but he doesn’t believe me. He probably thinks it was an unsuccessful murder!”

“Murder..... ”

I nodded, “Yes! It’s very simple. He knows I’m with Yun Li! And he said yesterday, he only trusts Yun Li thirty percent.”

“An Tingren doesn’t even trust me, not to mention Yun Li!” Huo Xiaoran’s voice suddenly appeared besides my ear. I only glanced at him. This fellow was getting bolder and bolder. Before, he only came at night, but now, it doesn’t matter whether day or night. Whenever he wants, he hops out and butts in.

But seeing that his color returned to normal, I let out a long breath inside. He was okay!

“Don’t worry! There shouldn’t be any problems with Mr. An! But what about after? How are you planning on ruining Yun Li?” I asked.

She glanced at me, then lowered her head, her voice even darker than usual.

“I will wrestle over the control of the Huo Corporation from her, then dig out all her black history, letting the world see who this haughty Miss Yun really is! I will make her live in the spit of people, until she loses the will to live!”

I shuddered, suddenly suspecting that if the poor, pitiful An Qiang was really the true her? I never thought that this was An Qiang’s plan. I assumed she would just chase Yun Li away.

“You should be careful of An Qiang! She’s hidden very deep!” Huo Xiaoran had moved to the window at some time. The sunlight shone on him, looking sparkly, very pretty. Blankly, I stupidly forgot to take back my gaze. Only when An Qiang

called my name repeatedly did I realize I blanked out.

“What? Yes, that’s what we’ll do!” I lowered my head awkwardly, my heart beating fast. I was a little worried that An Qiang might find something abnormal, so I glanced at her out of the corner of my eye. The good thing was that although she looked at the window puzzledly, she only asked me if I felt okay.

“I’m fine, I…… ” Before I could finish asking her to leave, a wave of nausea washed over me, and I ran out the door with Olympic speed into the restroom. I vomited that whole bowl of porridge I just ate.

Huo Xiaojin, Huo Xiaojin! Your porridge is so lethal! I wiped my mouth and looked at myself in the mirror. I looked pale. I was about to open the faucet when I heard two voices from outside the restroom.

“Sis, it must be Weiwei, it must be her! All these years, everything that happened to me must be because of her!”

The voice was very familiar, like I’ve heard it before. But I shook my head; eavesdropping was not my hobby. I reached for the faucet again when An Qiang’s voice floated into my ear.

“Little Ming, don’t overthink it! How’s it possible? These are just coincidences. You’re thinking too much.”

“Sis! I’m sure. Mu Ni woke up for a few minutes just now, and although she couldn’t talk yet, I heard her whispering ‘ghost’ over and over. Just that one word, I’m sure! It must be Weiwei.”

Then I heard An Ming’s sobbing, and then bangs, as if someone was slapping something.

“Little Ming, stop hitting, this is not your fault. It’s Weiwei’s own doing, and that event was only an accident! After all these years, do you still feel guilty? She’s already dead, dead for many years. Forget about her!”

I only realized now that might the female ghost who wanted to kill Mu Ni be the Weiwei they were talking about? Did An Ming accidentally killed his girlfriend?

“An Ming, don’t think about it anymore. How could there be ghosts in this world? You’re overthinking this!” An Qiang’s voice started fading away.

I walked out slowly from the restroom. As soon as I was out, I saw Huo Xiaoran leaning on the wall beside the door, his gaze also on two figures down the hallway: An Qiang and An Ming.

“Who’s that Weiwei?” I muttered. I didn’t expect for Huo Xiaoran to answer: “An Qiang’s younger sister! An Wei!”

I was suddenly rooted there, staring at the Huo Xiaoran beside me. An Qiang’s younger sister? In other words, An Ming’s older or younger sister? How could that be? A closest family member actually becoming an unhappy spirit and wouldn’t leave, only wanting revenge? What did happen in the An family?

Coming back to my senses, I walked to the window and stood there, facing outside, asking in a small voice, “An Wei? An Ming’s younger sister?” Of course I was asking Huo Xiaoran. The reason I chose this direction was to avoid anyone seeing me talking to a wall.

Huo Xiaoran moved closer to me, then shook his head and answered, “Not younger sister, but older sister! She’s An Ming’s older sister, An Qiang’s younger sister. An Qiang and An Wei were twins!”

“What, what happened to her?” My heart was jumping around nervously. I couldn’t understand; if they were siblings, why would An Wei become an unhappy spirit, and want to seek revenge from her own brother? Because after facing off with that female ghost, I was sure it had nothing to do with Mu Ni; it was An Ming.

Huo Xiaoran shook his head: “I don’t know what happened. I only remember that that year, the An family said An Wei died of an accident, and it was shortly before An Wei and Uncle’s wedding. But soon after, just at the end of the year, Uncle married and brought An Qiang into the Huo family!”

I was completely baffled! What does An Wei’s death have to do with An Qiang? An Qiang, An Wei, An Ming; and now Huo Ningen!?

Chapter 36: She Came

In the afternoon, Mu Ni awoke. Although she was still wrapped in white gauze, she was clear-minded. But when An Tingren questioned her, she only screamed about ghosts fearfully.

An Tingren was first surprised, then confused. Standing to the side, An Qiang and An Ming looked uncomfortable. One pale and frightened, the other's expression heavy and puzzled. Of course, me, who directly faced off with the female ghost, was not interested about the ghost Mu Ni kept shouting, but An Ming and An Qiang's behavior.....

Huo Xiaoran was beside me the whole time, warning me not to meddle in the An family's affairs. To be honest, after thinking about it, I think he's right. Even if I needed the An family's backing, I already talked it over with An Tingren; after making sure that I saved Mu Ni instead of trying to harm her under someone's orders, An Tingren will then stand on my side.

After Mu Ni described what happened that day, An Tingren talked to me, admitting that the An family was in debt to me. And I directly told him that I wanted to overturn Yun Li. Still, aged ginger is more prudent; with An Tingren, I couldn't guess how he viewed this matter.

Only when An Qiang fanned the fire worriedly from the side, An Tingren allowed, "I never bet sizes."

"Mr. An?" I started thinking. This answer wasn't good for me! His meaning was very clear: if he could only bet on one of us, me or Yun Li, he would not bet. Thinking here, I chuckled, "Mr. An, what if I give half of the Huo Corporation to Mr. An Ming if I win?"

Light immediately glinted in An Tingren's eyes, and I didn't say anything else. I trust that with this offer attached, he would definitely agree. The reason, simple: An Tingren was a businessman!

"Since Miss Mo has shown sincerity, I should also make my stand. Even if Yun Li married into the Huo family, you, as the wife of Huo Xiaoran, should be the legal heir. So, I will stand behind you. But remember, only behind you."

I was a little dumbfounded, looking at An Tingren, so sly! This was obviously because he didn't want to conflict with Yun Li head on!

"Tell him, he must appear on the board meeting. You must make Yun Li and the others know, that the An family is behind you!" Huo Xiaoran's voice appeared suddenly. Like before, I didn't dare look at him. With so many people present, if I suddenly turned and face the air beside me, people would think I'm mad!

Looking at An Tingren, I replied lightly, "Mr. An, at the board meeting, I hope you can attend. After all, if you, the large tree, isn't there, what should I do?"

A flicker of confliction appeared in An Tingren's eyes, then his gaze focused on me. But I chuckled coldly in my heart. I understood what Huo Xiaoran meant, but now this old fox might suddenly realize that I'm not as simple as I seemed.

Of course, before, I didn't know how to face all these. But after Huo Xiaoran's reminder I understood. I attended one board meeting, so if An Tingren's an old fox, then I'm at least a young fox! Without a strong and powerful backing, how would they all stand on my side.

If the situation favored Yun Li, then all I planned to do would be nothing.

"I understand!" An Tingren stood up and left, only leaving this one reply. When walking out the door, An Tingren suddenly stopped and turned to look at me. I could feel him suspecting something, but I smiled confidently, and he shook his head: "An Qiang, I need to leave home a few days. Today, you and An Ming take Mu Ni home, it'll be easier there. Miss Mo, you should stay at my house for a few days also. If you return now, you probably won't get any benefits from Yun Li."

I nodded. An Tingren really is an old fox. Just today Yun Li had called, telling me to get An Tingren's favor, make him appear on the next stockholder's meeting and support her.

Sometimes, I really didn't know what Yun Li was thinking, letting me do all these. If to say she trusted me, that was impossible. I glanced at Huo Xiaojin, who was standing outside the door. So it seems that Yun Li didn't trust me, but him! So Yun Li thought of Huo Xiaojin as her supporter, and I was only a pair of hands she could remote-control.

Not staying for long at the hospital, An Qiang and An Ming took Mu Ni home as An Tingren ordered. Now why did they say having money was everything? As they left the hospital, the hospital director came out and said they would arrange for doctors to go to the An house everyday until Mu Ni recovered, and told An Tingren not to worry!

Walking into the An house, it wasn't any less better than the Huo house! The yard where the accident happened was already cleaned up. The servants made some dinner, and An Tingren left as soon as he ate. The only difference between the An house and Huo house was that the servants never stayed overnight in the An house, but left after their work was done.

Night came. Ever since Mu Ni woke up and said there was a ghost, An Ming had been pale and frightened, yet An Qiang seemed to be happy. So she was already tasting the victory. Huo Xiaojin cared for me very carefully, even helping me hide the fact I was pregnant.

About this, I really was very grateful towards him!

Midnight, Huo Xiaoran was again in my room, sitting in the air lazily, telling me some of the business philosophies and simple advertising methods of the Huo Corporation. This was an agreement between me and him; to successfully snatch the Huo Corporation from Yun Li, he was tutoring me. Suddenly, I felt the floor under me trembling, and I sat up abruptly.

"This is?" I asked in a small voice.

In the air, Huo Xiaoran looked towards the window. After some time, he squinted and answered, "She came!"

"Who?" I frowned, not knowing who the "she" Huo Xiaoran was talking about. Only when Huo Xiaoran waved his hand, and the door locked itself, did I realize that was it An Wei! That female ghost!

The temperature in the room slowly decreased. Huo Xiaoran only moved his fingers, and the quilt wrapped around me tightly. He looked at me and shook his head. I understood, he was reminding me once again not to meddle.

I kept my hands over my belly. Now, I can't go and do things rashly anymore, because he was in my belly! I nodded. For the first time in my life, I forcefully

wrapped up my kind heart, repeating to myself, yesterday's debt, pay today!

An Wei was unable to rest must be because An Ming did something, and that was An Ming's debt!

An Ming's room was right above me. The hanging light in my room started shaking furiously, and some dust fell down.

"No! No! You're not real, not real!" An Ming's voice was exceptionally sharp, his footsteps frantic, as if he was running around in the room, trying to hide from something.

I was staring at the ceiling, my heart beating even faster, because An Ming's sharp voice seemed tragic. Huo Xiaoran, still floating in the air, had on an expression of indifference, as if nothing was happening.

"An Wei! I'm sorry, please let me go, let me go, I don't want to die, don't want to die, I..... " Before An Ming could finish, I heard a crack, extremely piercing in the night. It sounded like a bone breaking, and An Ming immediately screamed. I covered my ears in fright.

An Ming screamed for a long time, until his voice was very weak. But the creepy laughter in his room made all my hairs stand on end, and my body trembled. I've never heard a sound like that in my whole life. It wasn't possible for a human to make that sound; it sounded like a cat, but like a crow too!

"Return me my life!" A woman's voice floated through the air, very unreal, but I knew it was An Wei.

"It wasn't me! Really, it wasn't because of me. It's An Qiang, it's An Qiang!" An Ming yelled desperately. The sound of nails scraping on the floor sounded from my ceiling.

A woman's crazy laughter cut off An Ming's yell, then fast banging sounds came from above, like something was being picked up by someone and thrown around. With the sound, my eyes moved over the ceiling. Every time the banging sounded, I could feel the wall or the floor shake.

The sound of bones breaking and An Ming's screams and cries for help sounded. I closed my eyes in panic. I really wanted to go and persuade An Wei to let him go, but I knew that would be useless. Last time, when she wanted to kill

Mu Ni, I already touched her bottom line. This time, I really couldn't do anything!

Not long after, the room above me quieted. I stared at the ceiling curiously.

“Six times, I made you lose a person you deeply loved. But what about you? Do you not have any sorrow or regret? Did your heart even hurt? When I wasn't able to be with the person I loved, that pain was enough to kill me. But you? What about you? Haha..... ”

The dark laughter sounded ghostly. And then, bang! Another sound of something slamming onto the wall, along with the cracking sounds of bone breaking.

“No, it's not, not me!” An Ming's voice was already extremely weak, just these few words took him a long time to finish. Then I heard sounds of someone hitting the floor..... and An Ming's plea, “An, Qiang, save, me.”

Bang! I heard noise of the door opening next to my room, then a series of hurried footsteps. I was surprised; An Qiang's room was right next to me! Was she going to save An Ming? Originally, I wanted to follow and look, but before I could get off the bed, Huo Xiaoran stopped me. To fight a ghost, you had to be a skilled daoshi¹ to win!

Then An Qiang's voice sounded above me, “An Wei! Is that you? Your death, has nothing to do with us!”

“Hahahaha..... ” Creepy laughter sounded once again. I swallowed, truly admiring An Qiang's courage.

1. Daoshi: a person who fights and expels ghosts.[↩](#)

Chapter 37: To Love and Be Loved

“Save, save me, you, you tell her, all this, was, was, your plan.”

An Ming’s voice sounded more like labored breathing, with almost no strength left in them. Even after focusing, I still could only barely hear them. But the next moment, I was dumbfounded. An Qiang’s plan? That An Qiang, who couldn’t sleep at night, whose body was full of injuries? How could she, so weak and fragile, plan a murder?

“An Ming, don’t speak nonsense, what my plan?” An Qiang shouted desperately, then said, “Weiwei, whatever happened, you’re already dead. And no matter what little Ming did, he is your brother. Can you forgive him? Father already lost you; do you want him to lose little Ming too?”

I knew An Qiang was trying her best to calm An Wei.

“No! Why is it me, I don’t want to die, I can’t die! No! He that harmed me, I will definitely kill him with my own hands, kill him!” An Wei’s voice was at first hurried, but when she got to the end, her voice became very cold, without any emotion at all. Although I didn’t know what happened between them, but regarding that said about An Qiang, I was still confused. All say that a person near death would only speak kind words; how would An Ming still lie at such a time?

“An, Wei, it really, really wasn’t me! It was, was her! She told me to trick, trick you onto the rooftop, it’s her, because she loves, loves Huo Ningen deeply, so, so..... ” An Ming stuttered.

“Shut up! It’s not like that, An Wei, don’t believe him, it’s not as he says. It has nothing to do with me, really, nothing to do with me!” An Qiang’s voice was obviously hurried, and footsteps sounded above, sounding like An Qiang backing towards the door.

“She, she loves, Huo Ningen!” An Ming was making a last, desperate struggle. I closed my eyes. An Qiang’s love towards Huo Ningen was almost crazy, I knew that. Or how could any woman bear her husband sleeping with her sister-in-law in the house right in front of her eyes?

“You! Ahh..... ” An Wei screamed, her piercing voice resonating in the room, very scary. I swallowed abruptly, cold sweat dripping down, goosebumps rising from my ankles and all the way up.

“You! You must all die!” The sound of bones breaking and flesh tearing sounded, along with An Qiang’s frightened screams.

Not long after, silence elapsed. I opened my eyes slowly, thinking everything was over. But laughter appeared once again upstairs, so faint it might not be there.

“No! It has nothing to do with me, Weiwei. I didn’t do it, it has nothing to do with me!” An Qiang’s frightened voice was very small, but I still heard it clearly.

“Elder sister! Why? Tell me why?” Unexpectedly, An Wei’s voice was no longer piercing, but full of wronged and hurt. I sighed lowly. That’s right, from the the same womb; that feeling couldn’t be understood by just anyone. All say twins had a special connection, and how could this friendship be broken because of a man?

“It wasn’t me! Really, it really wasn’t me!” An Qiang denied desperately. Although I couldn’t see her face, her voice already betrayed how frightened she was.

“Elder sister.”

An Qiang started crying, mumbling almost intelligibly, “Weiwei, Weiwei, my Weiwei!”

I don’t know what An Qiang saw, but right now, her voice wasn’t as frightened, instead sounding more like nostalgia and regret. My eyes also blurred.

“Elder sister, Weiwei always trusted you. Whatever you said, Weiwei believed in it, and Weiwei never took anything that elder sister liked. Remember what Weiwei said when she was young? Weiwei will be elder sister’s Weiwei forever and ever! Tell me, tell me why is this.”

When An Wei finished, An Qiang sobbed even louder. Banging noises sounded above me, and I guessed that was An Qiang hitting the floor. Pain! Her sobs were full of pain!

“Weiwei, elder sister was wrong, elder sister really was wrong! I shouldn’t have done that, my Weiwei! Take me away, take me away, let me stay with you for the rest of my life. I never want to separate from you again, Weiwei!”

After An Qiang stopped talking, the room above suddenly quieted, becoming silent and without a sound. I don’t know what happened inside, but felt extremely bitter and sorry, because I could hear that emotion and anguish in An Qiang’s voice.

I couldn’t imagine that to get a man, An Qiang planned and killed her twin sister, and pushed all the blame onto her brother. What kind of woman was this?

After a long time, there still wasn’t any noise upstairs. I stood up, really wanting to take a look. And this time, Huo Xiaoran didn’t stop me, but followed behind me like a human, walking up the stairs with me.

As soon as I made my way upstairs, I saw the door to the first room wide open. It was that room. I made my steps softer, a little nervous. When I got close, my heart beat faster and faster, until I peeked in the door. An Qiang was sitting on the floor, unmoving. If not for her slightly trembling back, I would have thought she was dead, too.

There was only a faint light in the room, barely enough to see anything. Seeing that An Qiang was okay, I relaxed a little, searching the room for An Ming. When I saw the pool of blood and a twisted hand by the window, I sucked in a deep breath.

Four fingers on the hand were bent upward weirdly, and the bruises on the back of the hand looked like they were caused by hitting something. When my gaze fell on the head on the ground, the eyeballs bulging so outward they looked like they might fall out rooted me in spot. Only when Huo Xiaoran’s cold hand touched my face did I come back to my senses.

I moved to the side a bit, and saw that An Ming’s head was bent to an almost impossible degree. Just by looking at his body, An Ming was sprawled on the ground, but when you look at his head, he looked more like he was lying with his back on the ground. There were many lumps on his body; if not noticing the lump on his leg pierced through his pants with red, I would not have known they were bones.

Hatred! This was An Wei's hatred! I shook my head, feeling sorry for An Ming.

"Aunt?" I called softly, but An Qiang gave no response. She just sat there, neither crying nor screaming, her head slightly lowered, as if she was looking at something.

I walked forward a few steps, noticing that An Qiang was holding a pink card and a pocket watch. An Qiang's tears dropped onto the card, wetting it.

The pocket watch was still working, tick-tocking its way forward. Only now did I see the background of the pocket watch was a picture of two identical girls laughing at each other, their smiles sweet and happy. One girl was touching the other girl's cheek, her eyes full of love.

I knew in my heart, that that must be An Qiang and An Wei.

"Aunt..... "

I just started speaking when An Qiang started crying and fell to the floor, mumbling: "Weiwei, my Weiwei! My Weiwei..... " until she passed out.

With the help of Huo Xiaoran, I moved An Qiang onto the bed next door. Huo Xiaoran told me not to meddle, but she had a low fever, and I couldn't just leave her like this! Watching Huo Xiaoran leave in a temper, I started changing wet towels for An Qiang.

When her fever finally subsided, I let out a breath. Seeing that she was still holding onto the pink card, I took it out from her fingers, only to see the signature of An Wei. I couldn't help being a little curious, my eyes scanning upward involuntarily.

Elder sister, the person Weiwei loves the most is you. Because I know you love Huo Ningen, so this time, I was willful, I flirted with him, and lied to you: I'm not pregnant at all, that was only a willful joke.

I did all these just so I could attract your attention back to me. Since birth, I have grown up under your gaze; and without you, I don't know how I could live on by myself. Just let me be stubborn this once; I just really wanted to know what I would look like wearing a wedding dress. The wedding with Huo Ningen was only a joke.

When you read this letter, Weiwei will already be far away. I hope you can be happy with Huo Ningen. Weiwei will learn to grow up, to be independent, learn how to live without you! When Weiwei has grown up, Weiwei will return, return and give you a real hug! Sincerely and with love, Weiwei.

My heart was heavy! Stunned, I looked at An Qiang's face. Maybe the hurt on her body was far less than the pain in her heart! I knew, that in the end, Weiwei still couldn't vent her hatred on An Qiang. Even though she died without closing her eyes, she still gave An Qiang the chance to live, because she still loved her.

But how would An Qiang, who planned her sister's death herself, live the rest of her life?

Standing guard the whole night, I didn't call 911. When An Tingren came home, I calmly told him what happened last night. Of course, An Tingren went and visited An Qiang, and An Qiang confirmed everything I said. Standing outside the door, listening to An Tingren and An Qiang's heart-wrenching sobs, my tears also fell.

Which side hurt more? This question, probably only An Qiang knew.

"An Wei has already left, so Mu Ni and her child would be safe!" Huo Xiaoran's voice sounded besides me. I didn't look at him, but lowered my head and wiped away my tears.

I don't think I saved Mu Ni, because that day, if An Wei really wanted to take their lives, I believe that no matter how hard I tried to stop her it would still be useless. The only thing to be grateful for was that An Wei still has her kind side, and left An Ming a child.

The agreement with An Tingren has been solidified, and I had no more reason to continue staying. Because of her health, An Qiang stayed behind in the An house, and there was still An Ming's funeral for them to settle. Huo Xiaojin and I decided to leave today. Walking out the door, Huo Xiaojin kept asking what happened last night, but I didn't mention a single word.

Chapter 38: Showdown

On the way home, Yun Li called, and I told her that An Tingren agreed to attend the next shareholders' meeting. Hearing Yun Li repeat "this is good, very good" in the phone, I shook my head wordlessly, really looking forward to the expression on her face when that day comes.

Returning back to the Huo house, Yun Li seemed very busy these days; I only got to see her once or twice. But I liked it this way, since previously I was worried about how to face the sly Yun Li. I wanted to go back to college, but when I remembered Yan Bei, I gave up. I should wait a few more days, and when everyone forgot what happened between Yan Bei and me, I might return.

Uncle Huo Ningen also leaves early and returns late everyday, doing something. And except for walks in the yard, I stayed inside the house almost the whole time. Huo Xiaojin brought back bags of clothes everyday. Only when the clothes in my closet which I never wore were completely switched out by him, did he stopped his insane shopping spree.

"I say! Why are you buying all these?" I wasn't staying at the Huo house for long; two days later was the date for the board meeting. On that day, after overthrowing Yun Li, and persuading that old fox An Tingren to let Huo Xiaojin take over the Huo Corporation, I could leave the Huo family.

Stuffing the clothes into my closet and packing up the ones Yun Li prepared for me, Huo Xiaojin behaved like he didn't hear my question, the words out of his mouth completely unrelated to the question.

"How are you these days? Are you feeling unwell? Uh, if you need to go to the hospital, I'll go with you!" He said this awkwardly, but I laughed and shook my head. I had calculated the time; only after leaving the Huo house and getting rid of Huo Xiaojin, will I go to the hospital.

If I go now, Huo Xiaoran will definitely be suspicious.

"You're not feeling well?" As expected, Huo Xiaoran popped out of nowhere.

"Of course not! I'm perfectly fine. Huo Xiaojin, don't you need to work? So

much leisure time every day?” My words were intended for both of them. Taking advantage of Huo Xiaojin focusing on my closet, I glanced at Huo Xiaoran, afraid that he might discover something. But the good thing was, he didn't seem to notice anything.

Huo Xiaojin packed my old clothes into a box, and said while he was leaving, “Does the young master of the Huo family need to work?” Walking out the door, Huo Xiaojin kept raising his brows and winking at me. I pulled a straight face and glared at him, then slammed the door shut.

This freaking fellow was always so crazy, sometimes acting like a sweet guy, so caring and considerate, speaking soft and kind words; and sometimes he was crazy enough to go die!

Closing the door, I turned and saw a faint smile on Huo Xiaoran's face. It was one of those sincere smiles that came from the bottom of one's heart.

“Thank you!” Huo Xiaoran said.

I was completely baffled, and asked in confusion, “Are you ill? Why are you thanking me?”

“Huo Xiaojin hasn't been as gentle as this for a long time. I can feel, that his injured heart is slowly healing. And it's you who made a difference.”

I looked at him in confusion, but I did wonder in my heart. Really, these days, Huo Xiaojin is so different from when I first came to the Huo house. Even though sometimes he would still do things that annoyed me, at least I didn't dislike him anymore.

“How about telling me about his injured heart?” I purposefully changed the conversation topic.

Huo Xiaoran looked at me for a long time. When I was about to give up, he spoke: “Little Jin's smile is still in my memory. It was so beautiful, so warm, like the sunshine; no matter what difficulties I faced, as long as I saw that smiling face, I was confident that I could make it through.”

When Huo Xiaoran spoke, his gaze seemed distant, but his expression was warm and loving. I even felt that at that moment, he didn't give off that cold air anymore, instead replaced by a warmth, a warmth that could make you feel

warm even through a lightning storm.

At the end, I even forgot to breathe, sinking deeply into his expression. Only when I couldn't hold my breath anymore did I come back to my senses, and asked in a small voice, "Then what?"

I really was very curious. If Huo Xiaojin was such a warm, kind person before, then why, during my early days at the Huo house, he would return drunk every night; those days, I could read in the entertainment section of the newspapers everyday that he broke up with who, fell in love with who; and he even came to my room every night to throw a tantrum, sometimes even being too intimate with me. Could such a person, really be the sunshine boy Huo Xiaoran said he was?

"Then what?" I pursued. What did happen to Huo Xiaojin? I suddenly remembered that night, when Huo Xiaojin was in a fever, Huo Xiaoran had mentioned Yun Li. Could it be.....

"Is it Yun Li? Does it have something to do with Yun Li?" I asked in surprise.

Huo Xiaoran's expression went dark. After looking at me, he didn't speak, just nodded: "Yun Li was little Jin's first love, and the person little Jin truly loved!"

My eyes wide, Huo Xiaoran's words echoed beside my ears. First love, Yun Li was actually the person Huo Xiaojin truly loved! Then why? Why was Yun Li now Huo Xiaojin's stepmom?

"How....." I just started when I noticed that Huo Xiaoran had vanished. I stared out the window blankly, recalling that when I first came to the Huo family, I saw Huo Xiaojin looking at Yun Li secretly from far away. Did that mean, that after all this time, he still loved her in his heart?

That night, Huo Xiaoran didn't appear again. And I don't know if it's because of the questions in my heart or if it was because I was overexcited about getting rid of Yun Li tomorrow, I couldn't sleep. Before dawn broke I was up, getting ready through my black eye circles. Today, was the day with Yun Li.

Yun Li didn't come back last night. I could almost guess that she was at the home of that wrinkly, old man Chen, who attended the board meeting last time. Because counting that old man in, plus those who already support Yun Li, and

the An family's backing, Yun Li would almost definitely win.

In the morning, I called and told Huo Xiaojin to pick me up, going straight to the company. Clicking on my high heels, I walked into the company with my head raised.

Outside the door of the conference room, Yun Li was wearing a tight low-neckline, bright red dress with a low-neckline, and stood on a pair of high heels that were ten centimeters high. She twisted her snake-like waist and had on a confident smile. After glancing at me, she walked in first. I shook my head. Contempt? Then enjoy this moment as best as you can!

I touched my belly. Child, Mother will not give up. This time, let us try hard together!

"Elder An? Long time no see!" Everyone started getting excited over An Tingren, who just appeared at the door. An Tingren had no expression on as he walked in and sat down. Yun Li stood up slowly.

"Everyone! I know that everyone has their own opinions on the Huo Corporation, and there's nothing worth hiding about the will Huo Xiaoran left anymore. Even though the heir he stated was Miss Mo, but I believe you have also seen, that if the Huo Corporation is handed into her hands, it won't take long for us to lose all our stock and money."

"Correct! Regarding this matter, I disagree!" That old man Chen answered Yun Li. In my eyes, they were so obviously cooperating. The smile on Yun Li's face was extremely smug.

"That's what I thought, too. She didn't even graduate from college; how could she take this position!"

"Wouldn't this be burying the future of the Huo Corporation?"

"That's right, I agree too!"

Some people started discussing, and I couldn't hear all that they said in the chaos. But seeing them pointing at me, I knew it wasn't anything nice.

"It's your turn! If you wait too long, that old fox will lose his patience!" Huo Xiaoran appeared suddenly, speaking into my ear. I glanced at An Tingren, who

was sitting not far from me. Even though he was still expressionless, I could see the puzzlement in his eyes.

“Everyone!” I stood up. As soon as I started talking, they all silenced, the room getting quiet enough that I could hear my own breathing. I smiled, and continued: “I understand that you all do not trust me yet, but I want everyone to know here, that the future of the Huo Corporation is not just this.”

I paused. Instantly, the conference room exploded. Everyone started whispering, while Yun Li and old man Chen, who were sitting in the top seats, stared at me in disbelief.

“Say what I taught you before. I feel so satisfied seeing that woman go pale!” Huo Xiaoran continued.

As expected, when I looked towards Yun Li, her face really was a bit pale, but now I didn’t have a choice anymore! For my future, for him!

My hand flitting over my belly, I gave a confident smile: “Everyone, does the Huo Corporation today satisfy you? It’s future is not just so. As the leader of the make-up market, if we only continue as now, being overtaken will only be a matter of time. He who does not advance loses ground; I believe everyone here understands that!”

Bang! Yun Li’s hand slammed onto the conference desk heavily, the cup in front of her bouncing off and smashing on the floor. She stood up, glared at me, but after surveying the rest of the people, only said, “Xiaoya, you come out, let’s talk in private.”

But I just smiled at her: “Why do we need to go out; wouldn’t talking here be the same?”

“You!” Yun Li slammed her hand down on the table again.

“Now that things have come to this, let us see, who is more fit to sit in that seat!” When An Tingren, who had been quiet the whole time, spoke, everyone except old man Chen nodded their agreement.

Yun Li’s body went weak and she fell into her chair, breathing heavily. But I lifted my head, and pretty much recited Huo Xiaoran’s speech. I also took out the recent market plans for Hotday I created with Huo Xiaoran’s help, and let

them look it over.

“Tell them, what the Huo Corporation needs is growth, not conventionalism!”
Huo Xiaoran said with a smile.

Before sitting down, I repeated Huo Xiaoran’s exact words, and An Tingren led the applauding. After smiling, I sat down.

Chapter 39: Unforeseen Trouble

An Tingren suggested the break up of the meeting. Unexpected by me, I thought Yun Li would have many supporters in the company, but with An Tingren present, everyone unanimously turned this way. Walking out the door, I saw Yun Li still sitting there with a lost expression on her face. I know that my turning and An Tingren's cold blade behind her back was unacceptable to her.

But what could be done? You were never willing to give me a chance to live, yet I must live! Looking at her, I shook my head and left.

"She won't give up so easily, so it's best to be careful." Huo Xiaoran was still following behind me. I caught up with An Tingren and said, "Mr. An, regarding An Ming, I'm really sorry! Is Mu Ni and your grandson okay?"

"It's not that I don't want to tell you, but the time has not yet come!" An Tingren sighed in a low voice, his expression sorrowful as he answered, "Mu Ni is burned badly and upset, but with the child with her, she still has some hope."

After patting my shoulder, An Tingren shook his head and left. I bowed slightly, watching him leave. Huo Xiaoran, who had been beside me the whole time, remarked, "So you're not stupid?" He pointed at the gazes centered on me.

I glanced around, and the people around me dispersed hurriedly. I chuckled quietly, and answered, "Innocent doesn't equal stupid, right?"

When I saw the mountain pile of documents in my office, I almost fainted right then and there. But today, I finally experienced that with a ghost husband at your side, it was like cheating on a computer game, extremely enjoyable.

Using back pain as an excuse, Huo Xiaojin as a threat, I sat on the sofa, sipping tea leisurely while watching Huo Xiaoran look through the documents at the desk carefully. He only needed to move his fingers, and the pen would start dancing on it's own.

Regarding the end of the work day, just like school, I wasn't going to stay another minute! After stretching lazily, I was about to exit the company when a familiar voice called out behind me.

“Mo Xiaoya!”

I turned around, smiling coldly. It was Yun Li, and she marched toward me furiously. I stood there, waiting.

“You shameless little b*tch, actually daring to bite back at me. Are you still human? If not for me, how can you live so luxuriously and get the title of Mistress Huo!” She pointed at me and shouted furiously.

Looking at her slightly twisted face, I replied calmly, “Yun Li, you forced me into this! Before, my thoughts were simple: I just wanted to leave the Huo family alive! But what did you do?”

“What, what did I do?” Yun Li was so nervous she was stuttering.

I chuckled: “You planted yin gu on me, and every night of the full moon, I would slowly lose my life. Didn’t you do this? From when you bought me into the Huo family, you never planned to let me leave alive!”

She looked at me incredulously. I guess she couldn’t fathom how I knew. But that was understandable; if not for experiencing that fear and pain from being so close to death myself, I wouldn’t believe in yin gu and stuff like that either.

“What, what are you talking about, what yin gu, I don’t understand what you’re saying.” She tried to use detest to cover up the panic in her heart.

I shook my head, leaned in to her, and whispered three words at her ear: “Huo Xiaoran!”

Abruptly, she sucked in a breath, and looked at me fearfully. But I laughed. This was excellent, very excellent! I raised my brows and then turned around to leave.

But I only walked a step when someone patted my shoulder. When I turned around, a loud slap sounded, and my face burned and ears buzzed! I glared at Yun Li, raising my hand, but before I could make contact, I saw Yun Li fly backwards abruptly, screaming in fear, until she hit the glass wall behind her and slumped to the ground.

“Does it hurt?”

It was Huo Xiaoran’s voice. I turned and looked at him, admiring him for reacting so quickly. Even though my face still hurt like it was on fire, at least

seeing Yun Li frowning, trying to stand up yet unable to, I shook my head with a smile: “No!”

“Yun Li! Even rabbits bite when they’re pushed!” I yelled, hoping she could understand to not annoy me again. I never wanted to take anything from her; all I did was to try to open the cage she imprisoned me in.

On the way back to the Huo house, Huo Xiaoran’s brows were tightly knit. He didn’t speak, but kept glancing at my red, swollen cheek, so I could only keep repeating, it doesn’t hurt. Don’t know why, Huo Xiaoran was different from before. Before, he was always indifferent.

I didn’t dare think more on the topic, instead walking directly into the Huo house. Uncle was sitting on the sofa in the living room. Seeing me come in, he stood up and smiled broadly: “You’re back! I never expected Xiaoran to have hidden this card. We’ll depend on you for the return of the Huo Corporation!”

Uncle’s attitude change confused me. After blanking for a few seconds, I was pulled by him into the dining room. There, a table full of dishes surprised me. Grandfather, as usual, sat and ate quietly, but Huo Xiaojin didn’t come home today! I felt slightly guilty, because doing all this to Yun Li, probably hurt Huo Xiaojin’s heart.

At the table, my seat changed. Uncle sat at the head of the table, while I sat beside him. Although I was uncomfortable with his sudden hospitality, I didn’t know what to do.

“Xiaoya?” He called softly. I looked at him, puzzled. His expression was a little awkward, and after some time, finally pulled his head closer and whispered at my ear, “I heard Yun Li say that you and Huo Xiaoran got a ghost marriage, so can you, uh, him..... ” He stopped and pointed at his eyes.

I understood what he meant; he wanted to know if I could see Huo Xiaoran. I smiled and shook my head: “Uncle, what year is this, that there are still ghosts! Stepmom was tricked by someone.” Of course I wouldn’t tell him I really did see Huo Xiaoran, and was pregnant with his child!

Uncle nodded. I suddenly remembered that creepy old lady. Maybe Uncle knew where to find her! Before leaving the Huo family, I must get rid of the red string between me and Huo Xiaoran first!

“Uncle! Don’t know where Stepmom heard about ghost marriages, but have you seen that creepy old lady that went to my house to fetch me that day?” I gave it a try.

Uncle nodded, answering in a small voice, “Before you married in, strange things kept happening in the house. So Yun Li went to Hundred Years Mountain, and not long after returning, married you in. It’s strange to say, but once you married in, this house became peaceful again!”

Good, at least I know where to go find that creepy old lady, and getting rid of the connection will only be a matter of time.

While I was conversing with Uncle, Matron Wang was beside, helping Grandfather eat. She would glance at us now and then, but I didn’t think much about it; Matron Wang took care of all the daily needs of Grandfather.

We didn’t say anything else during dinner. Don’t know if it’s because I’m pregnant, but I ate a lot more than before, and didn’t feel full! I began to get worried.

At night in my room, Huo Xiaoran sat in the air with nothing better to do, floating around aimlessly. When someone knocked on my door, I glanced at him and opened the door, only to see Matron Wang outside: “Matron Wang? Is there something?”

Matron Wang looked a little nervous. After checking to make sure there wasn’t anyone else around, she put the plate of fruit into my hands and said, “Mistress looked tired, so I brought some fruit.”

I was a little confused. I accepted the plate, but Matron Wang moved the plate a little, revealing the piece of paper tucked underneath. Matron Wang then left hastily. In my room, Huo Xiaoran still sat there. Using it was getting late as an excuse, I shooed him away, and only took out the note after I was sure he was gone.

There were only a few words scrawled on the paper: Hundred Years Mountain, dragon lady, living in room 201 in the West City Hotel right now.

I recalled that during supper, Matron Wang overheard me asking Uncle about the Hundred Years Mountain. I just didn’t understand why Matron Wang would

give me this. In my opinion, Matron Wang was a kind person, because last time when I got sick because of the yin gu, Matron Wang truly wanted to help me.

I really was grateful toward Matron Wang for this. I found a fire lighter and burned the note to ashes. I cannot let Huo Xiaoran know about me trying to find the dragon lady. Even though we were working together, the child in my belly..... I didn't want him to know.

I can't just keep using Huo Xiaoran as the cure on nights of the full moon. Tomorrow, I was going to go find this dragon lady, and make her get rid of this yin gu!

Early next morning, I sent Huo Xiaoran to check on Yun Li, then told the driver to bring me to the West City Hotel. When I walked into the foyer, I happened to see the man walking out the elevator, and it scared me so much I darted behind a pillar.

Huo Xiaojin! Why was he here? Poking out my head, I saw that the woman beside him was no other than Yun Li, who didn't come home yesterday! Apart from my surprise, I immediately thought about the information Matron Wang gave me yesterday. The dragon lady; could it be that Yun Li came to find the dragon lady to use some dark and poisonous method to get rid of me?

Taking the opportunity while they were checking out at the receptionist, I quietly made my way to the elevator, and went up to the second floor without hesitation. With the room number 203, it should most likely be on the second floor.

Without spending much time, I found room 203, and knocked on the door. But the door swung open quietly! Maybe Yun Li didn't close it properly when she left. Pushing open the door, I walked in. The room was very clean. It seemed like a suite, with the living room in the front. But there was no one there!

"Hello? Is anyone here?" I called in a small voice, walking towards the bedroom. When I saw the lump under the quilt, I felt a little uneasy. When my hand almost touched the quilt, a piercing iciness rose up from my finger abruptly..... I withdrew my hand immediately! This feeling! To me, who had already been through two supernatural matters, this icy cold wasn't strange anymore.

Chapter 40: Murder; Who Wants To Frame Me

[Next Chapter]

Looking around, I started carefully backing out. I just made it out the bedroom when a noise beside me made me scream!

Wanting to escape, I banged into the table in the living room, knocking all the things on it to the floor. Only now did I look toward the source of the sound.

A woman was standing there, her hair messy and let down. The reason why I said it was a woman was because she was wearing a knee-length dress and her stomach was slightly bulging. My heart skipped a beat. This was a pregnant woman! No, my eyes grew wide, she wasn't human, she was a ghost!

A female ghost, with multiple holes in her chest, bright red liquid gushing out from her chest and splashing onto her bare feet, but on the ground she stood, the blood didn't make any stain at all!

She reached out her hand, starting to walk, her mouth opening and closing, but I couldn't make out what she was saying. My heart almost jumped out of my chest. I opened my mouth, wanting to shout for help, but when I could only whimper, cold sweat dripped down my forehead.....

Couldn't speak, I actually couldn't speak! I stared at her, sitting on the ground defenseless, trying my best to move my body backwards, yes! I didn't want to be touched by her. Just when her hand almost touched me, I was woken up from my trance by a piercing scream! Only now did I notice an attendant-dressed person standing in the doorway of the room.

"Murder! Murder! Aah....." She screamed, her face white.

I only glanced at her, my gaze still focused on the woman covered in blood! She was standing right beside the attendant.

I sat there with no strength to move. Not long after, because of the screams of the attendant, many people crowded around the doorway. The first to come in was a man wearing a manager tag. After rushing in, he looked around, then picked up his interphone and told the front desk to call the police.

A lot of people crowded outside, and someone yelled: "Isn't that Mo Xiaoya?"

"Who?"

"Mo Xiaoya! That woman who married Huo Xiaoran! Oh God, she actually killed someone!"

The noise outside the room suddenly quieted. Don't know if it's because there were a lot of people here, my body temperature rose, and I shouted weakly, "I didn't kill anyone!"

The manager directed the guards to break up the crowd, and I was also controlled by guards. The manager was very professional, telling me politely to wait here until the police came. Suddenly, I felt like I was immersed in a huge, deep plot.

Inside the room, the woman covered in blood had disappeared. Very soon, police came, and after checking the room, one police officer called, "Tell the coroner to come over!"

Then, the guards were ordered away, and many officers started searching the room. A man in his thirties started questioning me, and I told him when I came here, the door was open, so I walked in. Then I found someone had died, which scared me, so that's why I was sitting here.

"Captain! We found the murder weapon! It's this fruit knife!" A knife contained in a plastic bag fell into my view. My head buzzed. This knife; I seem to have seen it before.

I watched, scared, as the attendant who was screaming was also being questioned. She kept looking towards me, and the police officer writing it down also glanced at me frequently, so I felt even more nervous.

"No! It wasn't me! Wasn't me!" I screamed, until the man questioning me asked, "Why did you come here?"

I looked at him, opening my mouth then closing it, but unable to say anything. Yes! What should I say? Because yin gu was planted on me and I heard that the dragon lady was here, so I came to find the dragon lady? Obviously the female ghost I saw before was the person dead on the bed and not the dragon lady, not the creepy old lady who baptised me on the day of my wedding.

I must keep silent! I know, I will become the prime suspect, but I still couldn't say the real reason why I came here, because I didn't want to be locked up in an asylum yet!

After a few minutes, I was still shaking. The police officer who questioned me put handcuffs on me: "Please cooperate with our investigation!" Without any extra words, he waved his hand, and someone came over and hauled me out the door.

Forced out the room, my mind was blank. Lights on cameras flashed, and questions bombarded me: "Miss Mo! Please tell us about the situation inside!"

The voices, one after another, made their ways into my ears. Tears fell down the corners of my eyes, and I repeated weakly, "No! It wasn't me, wasn't me....." I struggled desperately, wanting to escape!

But I was stuffed into a police car and watched as the hotel got further and further away!

In a pitch black room, there was only one table. My hand chained to the table, I stared dumbly at the only light source on the desk, many questions rising in my heart.

Who was that woman? Because I didn't get to see her face clearly in the room!

I was framed! So who framed me? The first name that appeared in my mind was of course Yun Li, the reason very simple: because I took away the position of the Huo Corporation president from her!

Thinking to her, Matron Wang's kindly face surfaced in my mind. How to explain Matron Wang then? Unless from the start, she was with Yun Li?

Thud! The door made a loud clang, and I squinted to see two people walk in. One of them was the man who questioned me at the hotel.

"Mo Zhaodi! Two years ago, you changed your name to Mo Xiaoya. Currently a college student. Married into the Huo family three months ago! About killing Chen Ningxin, what do you have to say?"

But to such a question, my mind froze. Chen Ningxin, that large-bellied woman who made a commotion the Huo house! I remembered her, but I didn't expect

for it to be her! The words I planned to say to the police were all useless now that it was her.

“No! It wasn’t me! It really wasn’t me!” I roared in explanation.

The younger man among the two was holding a notebook, striking his pen against it. The constant pit-pat made me nervous and annoyed.

“Not you? At the scene, we already found the weapon, and did fingerprint analysis! The blood on the weapon is of the dead person, Chen Ningxin, and from the wound analysis on the coroner’s report, we are sure that that fruit knife was the murder weapon. And the fingerprints on that weapon is yours, Mo Xiaoya. What do you have to say to this?”

I was dumbfounded, my gaze wandering. How should I explain this, I really didn’t do it, but all this, all this, who did it?

“What about motivation? I have no motivation for committing the murder. And the time, when I entered the room, she was already dead. You can compare her death time with the time I entered! And the video from the surveillance cameras, the hotel should have the video of me entering the hotel! That, that can prove I didn’t kill her.”

I stared, hoping what I said could remind them. I can definitely prove I didn’t do it. Seeing them not answering, I felt slightly better. Maybe they hadn’t had time yet to look into all this, I guessed.

“Regarding motivation!” The man glanced at me, then continued coldly, “Chen Ningxin once said that she was pregnant with Huo Xiaoran’s child, so you’re afraid once the child is born, it will be a threat to you!” His tone was as if I was already a murderer!

“No!” I slammed my hands onto table, shouting furiously, “I’ve said before, I didn’t kill her! What does her being pregnant with Huo Xiaoran’s child have to do with me! I don’t care!” My heart hurt a bit, but I ignored it and yelled, “What about the time! I just went in a few minutes before the attendant came! Have you checked the video tape yet?”

“About the time!” The man frowned slightly, “We didn’t find record of you checking into the hotel, so that means you came in the morning. And we also

found the driver who you said brought you to the hotel this morning, but he denies having taken you!”

Realization hit me. This! This must be planned!

“Yun Li, it’s Yun Li who is framing me! I beg you, beg you to find the truth, I really didn’t kill her, it really wasn’t me!” I stood up, wanting to grab his hand, but a sharp pain from my wrist reminded me of that cold handcuff, and I fell back into my seat, defeated.

“It, it wasn’t me, it really wasn’t me!” I repeated, but who would believe me?

“Now, we are going to arrest you. If you have any objections, you can appeal to the court!” After saying this, the man stood up, and mentioned for the younger man to collect all their things and leave.

But I started screaming furiously, it wasn’t me! I didn’t do it, but why, why did everything point to me! Murder, what a great crime, you pay with your life!

“No..... ” My vision went black and I don’t remember anything else!

“Mama! Mama!” A voice as sweet as honey sounded by my ear. I slowly opened my eyes, and found myself floating in darkness. There was nothing around me, except the cries of “Mama”.

Raising my hand, I tried to pull the voice closer to me, but instead, a small hand grabbed my hand.

“Mama! Don’t worry, I won’t let any harm come to Mama!”

I saw, in my palm, a tiny, glowing light giving off a soft brilliance. It’s a girl! That’s what I heard from the voice. I smiled faintly. I must be dying; that why I’m hallucinating about the poor child in my belly.

“Mama is sorry, it’s Mama who couldn’t protect you! Sorry, darling, sorry, Mama is sorry!” My eyes wetted and I cried, because of this tiny life that probably won’t see the world. Originally, I had thought that I would be able to give her a wonderful future, but never expecte that she wouldn’t even get the chance to see this world.

[Next Chapter]

Chapter 41: Tears Are Bitter

Tears in my eyes, I slowly woke up. I was in a small, dark room without a window. A yellowish light glowed above my head, and a hard, metal bed beneath my body. I sat up slowly. I don't know how long I passed out.

"Awake?" Huo Xiaoran appeared in the air, looking at me, his expression cold.

I was a little nervous because of the iciness he gave off. Unconsciously, I scooted backwards a little, afraid to answer. After a long time, I nodded slightly as a response to his question.

My gaze wandered around the room. A thick metal door seemed to be the only exit. It was very quiet; in such surroundings, I couldn't tell whether it was day or night.

"I....." I started, but didn't know what to say.

Huo Xiaoran disappeared from the air and then reappeared right before me, demanding coldly, "Tell me, why did you go there?"

Looking at him, I was afraid. If I told the truth, what will his response be? Furious? I was in jail right now; where could I go? My hand touched my belly, and I didn't say anything. Not getting my answer, Huo Xiaoran suddenly vanished without another word. I didn't know if he was angry or not. Or did he notice something?

When I was almost going crazy in the little black room, the metal door was opened, and someone called: "Come out, you can go to the regular cell now." It was a woman. Her expression was blank and her voice was without emotion.

Walking out the door, a bright light made me squint. The light shining in from the windows was very strong and hurt my eyes. She walked in front leading the way, and another woman dressed like her followed behind me. The police uniforms they wore made them seem authoritative.

I walked with her into a room. She took a package of clothes from the desk and turned to me, "Go inside, take a shower, and put these on. I will take your clothes and deliver them to the storeroom. If you get the chance to leave, they

will be returned to you.” Finishing, she pushed open the door, motioning for me to go inside.

Inside was the shower room. After showering carelessly, I walked out. Because they said so, I put on the grey jail uniform, and was brought by her to another room. Inside this room, there was only a woman in a white cloak, looking rather old.

“Number 21005, check-up before going to jail.” The female police officer announced coldly, pushing me into the chair.

The check-up was very simple. Blood pressure, heart rate, a blood test. Then the doctor asked if I had any diseases, and I shook my head. Depressed, I didn’t know how to face all this. I was then transported to my cell.

The cell were not single. Two bunks were in the room, three beds already occupied. The female police officer banged her baton on the nearest bed then left.

I was a little scared, wanting to look, but not daring to, at the other three people in the cell. When I sat down on the edge of my bed fearfully, a young woman on the top bunk reached down and pulled me up. She looked at my number tag on my chest and asked, “21005, what crime did you commit?”

Her tone seemed friendly enough, so my tears fell again as I shook my head, “I didn’t, I was framed!”

“Really? There aren’t just a few who were framed here. You’re really unfortunate!” The woman lay back onto her bed, her feet in the air, and started studying her hands.

I didn’t dare say anything else. I sat down, but the person across from me yelled, “Who told you to sit down?!”

It was a fat woman on the top bunk on the other side. Her hair was cropped really short, and if not for the big lump in front of her chest, she looked more like a rough man. Don’t know if it was because her face was too fat, her eyes looked like slits. But her expression was cold and frightening. I blanked, then stood up quickly.

“Hong Ning, show her the jail rules!”

The woman above me threw down a notebook. It landed right in my face, making my whole face hurt. I picked it up and flipped it open. It was all handwritten, but that handwriting, looked more like a kindergartener's.

"Remember, memorize all these before you go to bed. The first rule, latest by tomorrow before dinner, bring the stuff over, or else....." She humphed coldly and lay back down. The bed creaked under her rolling.

I sat back down nervously, reading carefully, but after seeing the first rule, I went dumb. Five hundred, the first rule was to bring her five hundred RMB! Subconsciously, I reached out to feel my clothes. I didn't have a single penny on me!

"I....." I wanted to tell to her nicely, that I had no money on me. Not to mention five hundred, I couldn't even give her one RMB. But what I didn't expect was as soon as I opened my mouth, she sat up on her bed abruptly, her expression fierce as she jumped to the ground. Before I could process what was happening, I was pulled up by her, her hand tight on my collar.

I forget to talk as she glared at me, her face extremely close. I could even feel the air from her nostrils; warm and smelly.

"So it seems, you don't understand the rules?" Her other hand grabbed my jaw, squeezing so hard I almost fainted.

"Daring to talk while I'm sleeping! Hong Ning, come down and teach her!" She threw me forcefully, and I flew through the air and hit the door, hard. I crumpled to the floor, watching her in fear, even making my breathing the softest.

"Yes!" The woman on my top bunk got up and climbed down. She didn't put on her shoes but picked up the slippers. Walking to my side, without any warning, slapped my back with the slipper and said, "Get up, squat against the wall!"

Even though my back hurt, I didn't dare speak, following her instructions and squatting in the corner. I thought this was enough, but she only hit me harder with the slipper: "Who told you to do it like this, get your back away from the wall! Heels off the ground! If you dare drop them, be careful I don't beat you to death!"

Although her voice was quiet, the coldness in it couldn't be described by words. I didn't even dare look up at her, but kept my head low. I bit my lip, I must endure, I must live! I must live! Tomorrow, I will plea to the court. I will definitely leave this place!

That faith became my only strength now. Following her instructions, I stood on my toes, keeping my hands high above my head. This position was much harder than I thought, and many times because I couldn't keep steady, my heels touched the ground, and the woman called Hong Ning hit my head and back even harder.

My tears fell, not because of the pain on my body, but the shame in my heart! I started reflecting on myself. Why did I trust Matron Wang, I hated myself for making Huo Xiaoran go away, or else all this wouldn't have happened! Suddenly, I found out how naive I was. To all this, I couldn't even retaliate.

"I was wrong! Tomorrow, I will definitely give you every single penny of the money!" Unable to bear the pain anymore, I whispered.

Sure enough, Hong Ning stopped beating me. I was afraid to raise my head, but I could guess that the fat woman must have motioned her to stop that she stopped.

"Okay! Since you understand now, then go rest!" The gruff voice of the fat woman sounded, and only then did Hong Ning leave, climbing back onto her bed. After blanking out for some time, I slowly got up, dragging my battered body to the bed.

Tears dropped onto my pillow. The first time, I found that it wasn't salty, but bitter! It was as bitter as goldthread root, but I could tell anyone.

Only when I couldn't cry anymore, I fell asleep. But I woke up at dawn, because a hand, was moving on my body. Opening my eyes, I saw Hong Ning's face in front of me. Her tongue moved over her lips, a strong desire in her eyes. Frightened out of my wits, I wanted to scream, but her hand covered my mouth.

"If you obey, the days to come will be easier. If you don't obey, there are no regret potions in the world!"

Her voice as tiny, almost inaudible, and then her hand started moving from my

abdomen to my chest. I watched her in fear, not believing that a woman was actually touching my body.

I sucked in a deep breath and threw away her hand, crying, “No! I beg you, no!”

“What’s going on!”

The fat woman spoke, and the light went on. I cried towards the fat woman across from me: “I will give you the money, really, I beg you, please don’t force me anymore!” I wrapped my arms around myself and curled up in a corner of my bed, crying.

Hong Ning chuckled softly, finally taking her hand off of me, standing up and saying, “Big sis, uh, I!”

“Hong Ning, how many times have I told you, the newcomer hasn’t paid yet, so don’t touch her! If you block my money path, be careful I don’t kill you!” The fat woman snarled, annoyed.

Hong Ning kept agreeing: “Yes, yes!”

But I started wailing even louder, because the fat woman said, she couldn’t touch me before I paid, but what about after I paid tomorrow? Did I then have to endure the harassment of this psychopath Hong Ning?

Taking advantage of Hong Ning’s attention diverted, I pushed her away and ran to the door, banging on it heavily, screaming and yelling. I was mad, I didn’t even care about the pain in my hand. I used all the strength I had, even kicking with my feet, just to attract the prison guard’s attention. Sure enough, not even three minutes passed before the door was opened. I fell to the ground, grabbing onto the prison guard’s leg tightly and started crying. I wasn’t going to let go even if I die!

This was hell, not a place for humans! I must leave this place, as long as I could leave, I was willing to do anything!

Chapter 42: So Everything Was Fake

After being taken away from there, the prison guard took me to the doctor's office. Originally crying from the fright, I got much better under the comfort of the doctor, and I told her everything that happened in the cell, even though thinking about it made me shudder with fear. After listening to me, the doctor went out and talked to the prison guard.

I didn't expect, that my naiveness, made my future days in prison like hell.

When I was brought back to my cell, Hong Ning and that fat woman were gone. On the bunk below the fat woman's was a small figure, her short hair and tired face standing out. She looked sickly. When I came in before, I only glanced at her; I didn't even see her face clearly.

I was afraid of everyone here, including her. I sat back on my bed nervously, watching her fearfully. Although I was already very tired, I was afraid that once I fell asleep, I would be harassed by some other person.

She glanced at me, but didn't say anything. After a very long time, she got up, and handed me a plastic cup, asking quietly, "Are you okay?"

I noticed, that while talking to me, she seemed to be listening to the happening outside the cell alertly, as if afraid. I didn't dare accept the cup in her hand, only nodding as a response.

"How could you tell on them; no matter what they did, you shouldn't have done that!" She said.

I looked at her in confusion. Only when I saw a emotion in her eyes different than the others did I try to talk with her: "I, I didn't tell on them." I didn't tell the prison guard everything that happened. Suddenly, I remembered that after listening to me, the doctor had left and said something to the prison guard.

I realized, I was in big trouble!

"Bear with it! You must bear with it! After the hardest first month, everything will be okay! Remember, in the future, no matter what they do, don't tell anyone! That is the only way to stay alive." After telling me this, she quickly

walked back to her own bed, lying there and drinking the water she had offered to me.

The door opened, and the fat woman and Hong Ning returned together. Walking in the door, they glared at me, and I shivered and lowered my head, not daring to look at them. The prison guard left after warning them. Hong Ning stood in front of my bunk, unmoving, until the fat woman said, "Now's not the time!" did Hong Ning climb back onto her bunk. But her movements were huge, making the whole bed shake.

When the prison bell rang, the door was opened, and the fat woman walked out first, followed by Hong Ning and then the weak woman who wanted to give me water. I went out last, because I didn't know where we were going.

I followed the others to a large hall, where people were waiting in lines. I poked my head out, and found that we were in line for breakfast. Moving slowly, I also got a plate, but I couldn't find anywhere to sit.

Finally finding an empty seat, it was taken before I could walk there. Seeing another one, I hurried over, set my tray on the table and sat down. But before I could start eating, the three people beside me suddenly stood up, and left with their trays. I raised my head, only to see the fat woman standing beside me.

She sat down. Frightened, I wanted to stand up, but she kept a hand on my shoulder.

"You better sit obediently!"

Meeting her gaze, those murderous eyes, I didn't dare move again, sitting there waiting. She picked up a steamed bun and started eating, one foot on the bench, mumbling with food in her mouth, "Daring to tell on me! If I don't give you some warning, how will I be able to continue to live here!"

"No food for a week!" She whispered, but because of this sentence, I forced myself to put the steamed bun back onto the tray. Beside my ears were the weak woman's words, bear with it! Because I wanted to live!

After she finished her breakfast, she took away the food on my tray. The prison guard glanced at us, but because I didn't say anything, ignored us. Watching her finish my breakfast, my stomach growled with hunger.

After breakfast was work time. Because my case was still ongoing, from time to time someone would come and ask me questions. I sat there, and after finishing answering the police's questions, demanded, "I want to file a lawsuit!"

"What's the hurry, your case isn't even brought to court yet, and you want to file a lawsuit?" The man returned coldly.

I lost my last hope, until that familiar voice sounded beside me: "Tell him, you want to see Huo Xiaojin!" I was shocked, looking at him dumbly. He didn't leave, he was still here. My heart, which had turned cold, began warming up again, and my tears fell uncontrollably.

Only when the police officer was leaving and his chair creaked did I return to my senses. I grabbed his hand and blurted, "I, I want to see my family member, I want to see Huo Xiaojin!"

After a slight surprisement, he took back his hand and agreed, saying that it would be this afternoon, the precondition that Huo Xiaojin was willing to come after they tell him.

I nodded. I trusted that he would come!

At noon, just like in the morning, the fat woman finished the food in my plate. Before leaving, she also reminded me to pay what I need to pay before dinner.

In the afternoon, during the visiting time, my name was called. I was excited, but when I saw it was Yun Li that appeared outside the glass, I was dumbfounded!

"Who do you think you are, that you want to see Huo Xiaojin?"

Yun Li was again in all red, the low-cut neckline showing off her deep career line. On her face, that haughty and disdainful gaze announced to the world that she was the winner.

"Where's Huo Xiaojin? Where is he?" I asked. But only Yun Li's scorning laugh answered me.

"You won't see him! As long as I don't want him to come see you, he will not come no matter what!"

"It's you! You framed me!" I couldn't control my temper anymore! My body

tense, I slapped the glass in front of me.

Yun Li sat on the chair, looking at me as if I was a pitiful pet abandoned by my owner. Clucking, she replied, “Mo Xiaoya, you need evidence for everything!”

“Wanting to fight with me, you’ll still too young! Also, don’t think about the An family anymore. An Tingren wanted me to tell you, your matters have nothing to do with him!” Yun Li patted the glass and stood up, tugged on her extremely short dress, then walked away twisting her snake-like waist. In front of me, she just left haughtily.

I collapsed onto the ground, watching that red figure disappear from my vision. This time, no tears fell. But in my heart, I heard dripping sounds: I knew, my heart was torn open, and it was bleeding.

I started screaming in anger, pulling on my hair. Fake, everything was fake. The friendliness Huo Xiaojin showed before was fake; An Tingren promised he owed me, I even rescued his grandson, yet his promise was fake; and Matron Wang’s kindly face was also fake!

When I woke up from my muddled thoughts, I was again in the doctor’s office. An IV was connected to my wrist, and I stared at the ceiling. I was going to die here, I will never be able to leave this place again.....

“Mo Xiaoya!” Beside my ear, Huo Xiaoran was calling my name, but I didn’t want to see him. I really wished that on that day, I didn’t stupidly promise my father to marry into the Huo family. I wish that all this never happened.

“Don’t worry! I won’t let anyone harm you, I’ll get you out.” Huo Xiaoran’s voice was a little worried.

But I only smiled faintly and shook my head. I really wanted to say, no need, just let me die here. Anyway, I don’t have anything worth living for, so maybe leaving was my best release.

Worth living for! My hand suddenly went to my abdomen. This unborn child. My bleeding heart started beating again. What should I do? Child, Mama will probably have to live here the rest of her life. What would happen to you?

Suddenly, I felt something touch me in my palm. I stared, astonished. Was it her? That girl who appeared in my dreams? My child?

Warmth, started spreading from that point throughout my whole body. My originally frozen heart started beating again, and a voice shouted continuously, you can't die! Can't die!

I sat up abruptly, saying to the doctor: "I'm fine!"

The doctor looked at me curiously, then turned around to continue her business, answering softly, "You have slight anemia, so at least finish this IV!"

I nodded. This would probably be the last silent time I can get; after I walk of here, I could already guess what terrible things will happen: I didn't get to see Huo Xiaojin, so I didn't have money to pay the fat woman. I glanced at Huo Xiaoran's cold expression, biting my lip.

I needed his help. Even though I feel myself shameful, thinking about cutting the connection with him a few days ago, but now wanting to use him to keep myself safe.

After some thought, I made a decision. When the doctor left the room, I lifted my head to look at him, saying calmly, "Huo Xiaoran, I'm pregnant with your child!"

Facing his shocked eyes, I smiled: "Very surprised, huh? I was shocked too, but she is in my belly, growing up every day. And you, as her father, I hope that you can make sure she is forever safe!"

"How come?" He still wasn't back to his senses. He just looked at me, repeating the words.

I reached out, took his hand, and gently, placed it on my abdomen. Lowering my head, I asked softly, "Can you feel her? I felt her touch my hand just now!"

Chapter 43: Is She A Monster

Huo Xiaoran's astonished expression didn't go away even when the doctor came back. But he didn't say anything, just leaving his hand on my stomach and looking at it with shock.

And I fell asleep because of that slight peace. I didn't even realize when he left; I only woke up when I felt the prick of pain on the back of my hand.

"Okay! From now on, eat well, you're very weak." The doctor threw the needle away, and seeing me nod, started taking down the empty infusion bottles.

When the prison guard brought me back to my cell, there was no one inside. I was on edge.

"Huo Xiaoran?" I called out softly. Although I didn't want to admit it, I can't deny that I wanted him to appear. The time passed by slowly, and even though I called his name every so often, he never appeared.

The door to the cell opened, and the fat woman, Hong Ning, and that weak woman came back together. But the gaze the fat woman gave me was not friendly, and Hong Ning had an evil smile on her face. The weak woman didn't even glance at me before falling onto her bed, her face towards the wall.

When the door closed, the fat woman grabbed my hair and slammed me against the wall, snarling, "Where's the stuff?"

I saw the ruthlessness in her eyes, like a ravenous wolf, about to swallow me down whole. I explained nervously, "Today, today I, I didn't see the person I wanted to see, so....." I don't have the money. I didn't dare say this last part, because I was scared by her gaze.

I added hurriedly, "I will give you, double! Just give me some more time, and I will give you double!" Seeing her raise her hand, I brought my arms around my body, afraid she'll hit me.

"Double?" The fat woman pulled on my hair, making me face her, and laughed, "You think I'm stupid?"

“No! I will definitely pay you!” I yelled.

I thought the fat woman would give me a beating, and desperately hoped Huo Xiaoran would appear and save me. But when the large hand of the fat woman grabbed my chin and he still wasn't here, my heart dropped again, hurting painfully. I thought he was different from the others, but the results now showed that he was no different!

The fat woman suddenly let go of me, and I fell to the ground. She turned around and sat on the bed, looking at me, “Hong Ning paid your money, so this month, you are hers! Remember, next month pay the money on time, or else.....” The fat woman humphed, then got up and climbed up onto her own bed, not looking at me again.

Hong Ning looked at me evilly, a different emotion in her eyes. I started trembling involuntarily. That night, when I woke up from my dream and saw Hong Ning's face, was my worst nightmare.

“No! I beg you, I will pay you, I just need time.” I curled up, holding myself tightly. I was frightened, even frightened of Hong Ning's gaze.

Hong Ning chuckled coldly, coming to my side, her hand reaching towards my face. I buried my face into my knees, trying to evade her touch, screaming, “No! Leave me alone, no.....”

But my pleas were only met with the fat woman's laughter and Hong Ning's even bolder touches. My head buried, I waved my hands in the air, trying to make Hong Ning go away, but instead, she grabbed my hand and stroked it, making me scream even louder.

“Hong Ning! Don't do it here! Disgusting!” After saying this, I heard the bed creak, and I knew the fat woman must have climbed onto her bunk. Laughing coldly, Hong Ning let go of my hand, whispering into my ear, “You'd better behave yourself, don't make trouble, or your one month might become many months.”

I cried. I never thought that in a place where there was only women, there would be such a disgusting person and such disgusting things. I even wanted to kill myself right then and there to avoid Hong Ning ever touching me again.

When the bell for turning off lights sounded and the fat woman turned off the light, I was still curled up on the ground, crying and trembling. I was so afraid of Hong Ning that I felt dizzy. My fearful eyes watched Hong Ning's bunk without blinking. If she dare touch me again, I really will fight to death.

In the dark, I watched her closely, not daring to be careless at all. But while I was waiting through the torture of time, Hong Ning didn't get up. Close to two a.m., I saw the bunk Hong Ning slept on starting to shake, and I thought Hong Ning was coming down.

I stood up, ready to fight with her!

But Hong Ning didn't sit up, still lying flat. The bed was shaking and creaking. Puzzled, I squinted, moving forward a few steps involuntarily, and saw that Hong Ning's face was pale as she struggled on the bunk, legs kicking, her two hands on her neck.

Her breathing was labored and her mouth opened and closed, as if someone was strangling her. I backed up fearfully, my mind clearing. Ghosts? This was the first word that appeared in my mind. But no, if it were ghosts, I should be able to see them, and there was nothing on her at all!

I walked forward again, this time nearer, because I knew she couldn't come down and I was boldened. My nose almost touching the bunk, I saw Hong Ning's eyes wide open, her eyeballs bulging, staring at the ceiling, whimpering. I watched as her face turned from pale to blush, to green.....

Her eyeballs turned, and fixed them on me. One hand on her neck moved towards me, fingers straight. I backed up instantly, scared and confused. I looked at the space above her carefully, nothing! There was nothing there!

What was happening? The bunk hit the wall again and again, banging and creaking, my heart also beating in tune with that banging. The fat woman suddenly snarled, "Hong Ning! Be quiet!" Then turned around and continued sleeping. I saw that the weak woman opened her eyes slightly and looked at me, but didn't say anything.

Just when I didn't know what to do, a sweet and childish voice sounded by my ear: "Mama! Don't worry, she'll never bother you again!" When the voice stopped, so did Hong Ning's struggles. The room once again returned to silence.

Standing there, I was too scared to even move a step. This voice, was the voice of the child that I imagined, how could it appear here, and..... I looked around in a panic, no, nothing, I couldn't see anything. I tried my best to calm myself, trying to feel the temperature of the air.

I remember, that when ghosts appear, the temperature in the room would decrease suddenly. But here, even though I closed my eyes for a long time, I was sure the temperature didn't change in the room.

“Mama! Don't worry, you can rest safely now, she will never bother you again. Everything that you don't like, baby will make them all disappear!”

The voice sounded again, and my heart skipped a beat. This time, I heard it clearly, and my hand moved to my stomach. Right there, I felt a tiny little hand, touching mine from the inside, and a warm feeling started in my palm and spread out throughout my body.

Instantly, the fear in my heart evaporated. Even looking at Hong Ning's tense legs and her outstretched hand, I wasn't afraid.

Lightheaded, I walked to the bed and sat down. I didn't know what happened; did she kill Hong Ning? My child, killed Hong Ning?

“Huo Xiaoran!” I called softly. I needed to see him, I needed to ask him, what was the child in my belly like. Was everything I thought before wrong? I started worrying. Right now, the only person to ask was Huo Xiaoran!

Silence, frightening silence. He didn't appear, so I called out once more: “You come out, or I'll die here right now, do you believe me?” I wasn't just scaring him. If my child was a monster, I would rather take her with me. Before, I never thought about what a child conceived with a ghost would be like.

Because she was in my belly, because the doctor didn't find anything different than a regular pregnancy, I buried all my doubts deeply into my heart. But now? Everything that happened told me that what I thought was wrong! No, this cannot be. If she was a monster, I didn't even have the will to live.

“You!”

He finally appeared. This was the first time he appeared since I told him I was pregnant. I looked at him hastily, asking, “Child, my child, is she..... ” I paused, I

couldn't say the words, my voice choked in my throat, the last words stuck there.

I looked at him, worried, my hands grabbing the bed sheet tightly, waiting!

"What happened?" He asked.

I stared. "Everything that just happened, you don't know?"

When I saw him shake his head, I almost fainted, the tears falling down instantly. He frowned, his cold hand touching my face, "What just happened?"

"I, just now, Hong Ning, my child....." Stammering for a long time, I still couldn't say a complete sentence.

"What happened?" He was worried. Seeing I couldn't say anything that made sense, rarely, his expression was worried.

I told him everything that just happened. Of course, I changed Hong Ning's disgusting behavior into them hitting me. Not that I wanted to lie, but I had my own dignity, and..... I was a little afraid of Huo Xiaoran knowing that Hong Ning's dirty hands had touched me.

"They hit you?" He asked coldly, but his eyes were looking towards the snoring fat woman.

I nodded. The next second, he raised his hand towards the fat woman. I looked over in a panic, and saw the quilt on the fat woman's body fly up, and then immediately wrapping around the fat woman tightly. The fat woman's grunts sounded from inside the quilt.....

Chapter 44: Unhappy Spirits

Huo Xiaoran turned his hand, and the quilt started twisting itself in a spiral, the body of the fat woman struggling inside. I was a little scared, wanting to tell him to stop, but after I saw his pale and icy face, I swallowed back my words.

Muffled cracking sounds came from inside the quilt. Bones, it's the sound of bones being squashed together! Crack! The crisp sound was loud in the night. I saw the leg of the fat woman bend ninety degrees straight up. Heavens! I sucked in a breath, understanding: Huo Xiaoran wanted to kill her!

“St-.....”

“Stop!”

Before I could say -op, my child's voice sounded once again. I stared, and looked around in a panic, but just like last time, I couldn't see her, only hearing her voice.

Maybe because he heard the child's voice, Huo Xiaoran suddenly released his grip, and with a bang! The fat woman and her quilt fell onto the bed, hard. The bunk creaked crazily, and I was afraid that the weak woman beneath would scream in fear, so I watched her worriedly. But after a long time, she was still lying there, her face towards the wall.

I guessed that she probably didn't want to interfere! I definitely won't believe that she was always asleep, because when Hong Ning was struggling earlier, I saw her open her eyes. Even though it was only for one second, that meant she was already awake.

“You cannot kill people!” The childish voice was no longer warm, sounding cold and harsh right now, but still unable to cover her naive tone.

Huo Xiaoran turned around and looked at me, or more specifically, at my belly. I didn't know what to do, so I pulled over the quilt and covered myself up.

“What, what are you looking at!” I asked in a small voice, glancing at the weak woman out of the corner of my eyes. One person dead, another half dead; if she saw me talking with the air, maybe I'll be sent to the asylum tomorrow.

Huo Xiaoran squinted, pursed his lips, and asked coldly, “You know not to kill?”

He! He was talking with the child? But this topic seemed inappropriate! I suddenly remembered Hong Ning, and my body tensed, yes! What was the child in my belly actually like.....

“Of course I know!” The child’s answer was calm, but sounded like she was boasting!

“You know? You know and you still killed this woman up here?” Huo Xiaoran’s expression couldn’t be described as cold anymore; it was a poker-face now.

I felt something like a small hand touching my belly, but coming from inside, not outside! And it was warm.

“What I killed? Which eye of yours saw me kill someone! I’m a good child!”

This is the first time I heard my child talk like this, like a young child holding your hand, shaking it, wanting you to praise her. My heart, which was full of fear a minute ago, suddenly relaxed. Even though we still weren’t sure whether Hong Ning was killed by my child or not, I trusted that if she said so, maybe she didn’t kill the person? I prayed in my heart.

“Not you” Obviously, Huo Xiaoran was also confused!

But the child suddenly changed the topic and asked: “Mama! Did that woman bully you too?”

Suddenly asked, I blanked, and nodded my my head dumbly. The child didn’t speak again, but the wrapped body of the fat woman suddenly floated into the air, above the bed. Then the creepy thing happened. The temperature in the room suddenly decreased greatly, and goose bumps popped out all over my skin.

Then I saw that something was tearing at the quilt. Squinting, I knew something else must have come into this room. When I saw it was black shadows tearing at the quilt, I became so afraid that my body began trembling. Numbness started at my feet, spreading throughout my body.

Staring. The quilt was torn to pieces and fell to the floor, and only now did the body of the fat woman appear. Her leg, or her thigh, had a sharp thing poking out. Looking carefully, I realized that that was her thigh bone!

Huo Xiaoran did that! When I saw her moving chest, I knew she was still alive. Suddenly, a black shadow scurried on top of the fat woman, and then her clothes and body started bulging weirdly. Then , her clothes started turning red.

I watched fearfully, because there, it looked like, that something had pierced into her flesh. The eyes of the fat woman flew open abruptly, and like Hong Ning, her expression was painful, her eyes bulging, like they were going to pop out! Her eyes started turning red, filling with blood!

Then she opened her mouth, but right then another black shadow appeared at her throat. The black shadow moved closer, and then..... then at her throat, a red liquid sprayed out, falling all over the bed.

My palm was icy, and the temperature in the room continued to drop. I even suspected that it might frost. My quilt, which was warm a few seconds ago, was now as cold as if it was put into the freezer. I curled myself up tighter, wanting to be more comfortable.

The body of the fat woman floated there, with more black shadows than before, almost covering her whole body. Her eyes were bulging and tears started appearing in her skin; chunks of flesh even fell to floor, the blood dripping onto the bed from her body, dying her whole bed red.

Then it dripped onto the floor. I sucked in a breath, feeling there was no other color in front of my eyes, just that glaring red!

The smell of blood filled the air. Covering my mouth, my stomach rolled. I shut my eyes and didn't dare look again, lowering myself. Because I hadn't eaten for so many days, there wasn't anything to vomit, except for a bitter fluid in my mouth. The good thing was that it wasn't much. I knew that was stomach fluid, because I hadn't touched any food.

The scene of the fat woman eating the food from my plate appeared in my mind. Hate, I hated so much my teeth clenched tightly together, and I crawled to the side of the bed and spit out all the fluid in mouth. Opening my eyes, I saw that chunks of flesh littered the ground, blood red, while the fat woman was already indiscernible.

There wasn't any skin left on her body, and numerous teeth marks dotted her face, the skin tore from her cheeks also. Those clear teeth marks made me

understand, that it was bitten by something!

Heavens! What were those black shadows? And how did they come here?

Huo Xiaoran stood silently beside me, until the childish voice sounded from my belly: “See? I didn’t kill her! They did!”

“Unhappy spirits!” Huo Xiaoran’s voice was heavy, and I didn’t know whether this was good or bad. But seeing Huo Xiaoran’s tightly knit brows, I felt that this probably wasn’t good!

“What are unhappy spirits?” I moved, leaning against the head of the bed, to block my view, because it was way too bloody! Looking at Huo Xiaoran, I really couldn’t understand.

“Unable to leave because of hate, with their reason and conscious finally swallowed by hate, then start to kill people for no reason! Then, they would lose their human shape, and can only wander the Abyss of Nothingness forever!” Huo Xiaoran’s tone was serious.

I remembered what he said, that humans have things they cannot do, and ghosts also have things they cannot do. Putting everything together, I seemed to understand, that ghosts can’t kill people for no reason, or they will turn into those black shadows, and become what we often curse: everlasting damnation!

Slowly, with the fat woman’s body being torn and mutilated, the black shadows started vanishing, and the temperature started to rise to normal. My hand was over my abdomen. Even though I was prepared that a child with a ghost would be different, to look at it now, she was more than different!

“Mama! Baby is tired, so baby is going to sleep, baby..... ” Before finishing her sentence, the voice disappeared.

I looked at Huo Xiaoran nervously: “She..... ” I meant the child in my belly. If she was a monster, still that sentence, I would rather take her with me.

“How could my child be like what you think! Go to sleep!” Huo Xiaoran was upset. The first time, after he said “go to sleep,” my vision actually went dark and I lost consciousness.

Only when in the morning, the door opened and I heard a piercing scream, did

I quickly crawl up. Of course, there was still that weak woman. I saw that her body was shaking, but after enduring last night, even though I still felt queasy, except for disgust, I didn't have any other feelings.

Soon, both the weak woman and I were led away. It should be breakfast time, but all the prisoners were still locked in their cells. Some prisoners started banging on their doors and shouting, but only our cell, came a lot of prison guards, who led both of us away.

The dark, little room was no surprise to me anymore. Watching the only light on the desk, I sat calmly in the chair, waiting. Overnight, two people in our cell died, and one of them in such a gruesome way, so of course we must be interrogated. The only thing keeping me worried was that weak woman; she must have saw me talking with the air last night.

The door opened, and a man walked in. I was a little surprised. His clothes were that of a prison guard, but he had badges on his shoulder! I didn't understand until the man sat down and started talking, "I'm the warden here. Regarding last night, do you still remember what happened? "